RUTHLESS PEOPLE

by DALE LAUNER

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FADE IN:

EXT. AN ALLEY BEHIND TRACT HOMES IN THE VALLEY - EARLY MORNING

A garbage truck drives past.

TITLES READ: RUTHLESS PEOPLE

A filthy disgusting man with the terror-filled eyes of a psychotic steps out from behind a telephone pole. He jerks around suddenly - thinking someone's behind him. But no one's there. Then he walks away. CAMERA PANS TO A BRICK WALL AND LIFTS UP. We can see someone's kitchen. CAMERA PULLS INTO CLOSE SHOT OF TABLE IN KITCHEN.

Two full-head, latex, duck masks lay on the table, along with an automatic pistol, a bottle of chloroform and a bag of cotton balls. Then two trembling female hands enter the frame holding a plastic medicine bottle of valium. She wears a modest wedding band. She removes eight tablets and carefully arranges them in a neat little row like a jeweler presenting rare gems.

FEMALE VOICE (SANDY) (O.S.)
(very nervously)
Only eight left...only eight!

MALE VOICE (KEN)(O.S.)
How many do you want?

(beat)

SANDY (O.S.)
Eight.

Ken's hands enter the frame and gesticulate his speech. He also wears a modest gold wedding band and an old Timex with a black, worn, leather band.

KEN (O.S.)
I'll take one...and a half.

He takes one and breaks another in two - leaving half. Sandy stacks the rest like poker chips and takes them all.

KEN (O.S.)
No. Leave some for later. For after.

Her hand returns to the frame and leaves the half.

KEN (O.S.)
Sandy!

She returns two more. Ken pulls her hand back into frame and pries her fingers open. He removes four tablets.

KEN (O.S.)
(dryly)
I'd like you to be conscious when we do this.
(turns wrist, checks watch)
It's time.

SANDY (O.S.)
(very apprehensively)
Oh....shit.

Ken's hand reaches across the frame and holds Sandy's hand, comforting her.

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE SHOT - HANDS OF SAM STONE AND CAROL FARNSWORTH - DAY

These hands are older, greedy, "ruthless" hands. She wears a number of gold and diamond-encrusted rings and bracelets - but no wedding ring. On one hand, he wears a heavy gold wedding band tastefully lined with flawless diamonds; on the other other, a platinum ring and Rolex. Her hand rests on top of his, with her finger sensuously stroking his.

SAM (OFFSCREEN)
Carol, did I ever tell you WHY I married her?

CAROL (OFFSCREEN)
Yes, Sam, you've told me many...

SAM (OFFSCREEN)
(interrupting, in an angry trance)
Her father was VERY, VERY rich, and VERY VERY sick. The doctors ASSURED me he was going to die any minute. There wasn't a moment to lose; I rushed out and married the boss's daughter.

CAMERA PULLS BACK TO REVEAL SAM AND CAROL. They are seated in the patio of a posh Beverly Hills restaurant. SAM is a well-dressed, distinguished-looking man in his early 50's. CAROL's a flashy, attractive, 35-ish, bleached blond.

SAM
He was so sick...it was like the Angel of Death was sitting in the room, watching the clock. Then they pulled the plug on him. He wheezed and shook for about an hour...and then he...
(incredulously)
..."stabilized". The son of a bitch (CONT.)

SAM (CONT.)
just got...older and sicker and...
(beat)
older and sicker...and...
(angrily)
OLDER and SICKER
- He was the Man Who Wouldn't Die!
The old bastard hung in there for another TWENTY FIVE YEARS. Then he finally died - of old age. After the first five years I got tired of waiting.
(beat)
- I went out and made my own fortune.
(bitterly)
But it's not enough. I want that money. His money, her money - it's my money. I earned it; I had to live with that squealing, corpulent little toad all these years.
God I hate that woman!
I hate the way she...chews her food.
I hate the way she...licks stamps.
I hate the sound she makes when she sleeps...
(mimicks a bizarre snore)
And I hate that filthy little shitbag dog of hers - "Muffy".

CAROL
Are you...scared?

SAM
Scared? Hell, no - I'm looking forward to it. My only regret, Carol, is that the plan isn't more...
(with a clenched fist)
...violent.

CAROL
Isn't a car falling off a cliff...
...violent?

SAM
Nah...she'll be unconscious! I mean...
(crushing his napkin)
...hands on involvement.

CAROL
(seductively)
Hands on?

She reaches under the table and runs her hand up Sam's leg. Sam smiles dreamily. Lost in love? Then he claps like a

quarterback exiting a huddle and jumps to his feet. He drops some bills on the table and kisses Carol goodbye.

SAM
I can't wait - I'm going now.

CAROL
Good luck.

CUT TO:

CLOSE SHOT - BOTTLE OF CHLOROFORM IN SAM'S HANDS

The bottle reads: DANGEROUS FUMES, DO NOT INHALE
Sam opens the bottle.

WIDER - SAM STONE'S HOUSE - THAT AFTERNOON

It's a large, luxurious home secluded among trees in Bel-Air. Sam, with a gleam in his eye, walks from his Rolls to the front door while dousing a couple of handkerchiefs with a bottle of chloroform.

SAM
(quietly, sweetly, to himself)
Barbara dear, I have something for you!

INT. FOYER -SAM

The house smacks of wealth. It has a warm country French feel to it. Sam goes up a magnificent curved stairway.

SAM
Oh Barbara! Where are you dearest?
I have something for you!

MASTER BEDROOM - SAM

Sam comes in and looks around. There are twin beds.

SAM
Barbara?

BARBARA'S BATHROOM

Sam sticks his head in. Her bathroom looks like an over-stocked cosmetics display from a chic department store.

SAM (OFFSCREEN)
Barbara honey! You're supposed to
be here sweetheart!

Cursing and mumbling to himself, he comes out of the bathroom and goes into an enormous walk-in closet.

SAM(OFFSCREEN)
Where the hell are...
(bursting with anger)
GodDAMN that dog!
(hops from closet to bathroom, mumbling)
...she's the goddamn Johnny Appleseed of dog crap.

KITCHEN - MINUTES LATER

It looks like a Williams Sonoma showroom. WE CAN HEAR SAM'S VOICE GROWING LOUDER AS HE APPROACHES THE KITCHEN.

SAM(OFFSCREEN)
Bar--bra! Bar--bra!
(beat)
Dammit Barbara!

He enters and checks the chalkboard. No message.

SAM
(to himself)
No notes, no messages. This is not like you - you meticulous bitch.
(muttering under his breath)
It'd be just like that woman to screw this up.

DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY

Sam turns into the last possible and least likely hiding place of all - his office at home. The door is opened.

SAM'S OFFICE/STUDY

It's a hi-tech office, dramatically different in taste to the rest of the house. Hiding from Sam, behind his desk is MUFFY, Barbara's little, diamond-collared white poodle.

SAM
(glaring at the dog)
What are you doing in here? Mining the carpet with little poodle bombs?

Sam checks the room for poodle bombs. He looks behind his desk and his face goes red with anger. He rushes at the dog with the chloroform and chases her out of the office.

BACKYARD - SAM

Sam chases Muffy out of the house, past the pool, tennis court, and expensive lawn furniture. Muffy runs down a hill leading to a canyon behind Sam's house. Sam throws

the chloroform at the dog, which goes way down the hill.

LIVING ROOM - SAM

He comes in from the backyard, flops down on the couch, and defiantly puts his feet on the table. He leans back and sighs, frustrated. THE PHONE RINGS. He answers it.

SAM

Hello?

KIDNAPPER
(malevolent-voiced)
Mr. Stone. Listen very carefully. We have kidnapped your wife. We have no qualms about killing and will do so at the slightest provocation. Do you understand?

SAM
Who the hell is this? Is this a joke?

KIDNAPPER
(indignantly)
I have no patience for stupid questions Mr. Stone, and I do not like repeating myself. Do you understand?

SAM
(puzzled and amused)
Alright, sorry, please continue.

KIDNAPPER
You are to obtain a new, black, Samsonite overnight case model number 1056. Do you understand?

SAM

Yes.

KIDNAPPER
In it you will place 500,000 dollars in unmarked, non-sequentially numbered 100 dollar bills. Do you understand?

SAM

Sure.

KIDNAPPER
Monday morning at 11:00 A.M. you will proceed with case in hand to the corner of La Brea and Wilshire, enter the phone booth near the bus stop and await further instructions. Do you understand?

Sam rolls his eyes in response to the repeated query.

SAM

Yes I do.

KIDNAPPER

You will be watched at all phases of execution. If anyone is with you, or if any action is not carried out to our complete satisfaction, it will be considered an infraction of the rules, and your wife will be killed...

Sam mouths the words of the kidnapper as he says...

KIDNAPPER

Do you understand?

SAM

I believe so.

KIDNAPPER

If you notify the police - your wife will be killed. If you notify the media - she will be killed. If you deviate from our instructions in any whatsover - she will be killed. DO YOU UNDERSTAND?

SAM

(dryly)

Perfectly.

KIDNAPPER

Good.

WE HEAR A CLICK AS the kidnapper hangs up.

CUT TO:

EXT. - SAM'S HOUSE FROM THE STREET - 30 MINUTES LATER

It's a circus of reporters, photographers, mobile TV news crews, neighbors, and scores of uniformed police.

CUT TO:

INT. - KEN AND SANDY'S GARAGE - THE HALLWAY - KEN, SANDY, AND BARBARA - A FEW MINUTES LATER

It's loaded with garage-type junk and the remnants of ocean-related interests, including scuba equipment, a surfboard, fishing rod, an inflatable raft, lots of cardboard boxes.

SANDY, a pretty woman in her early 30's with long blond hair, gets out the passenger side and closes the garage door. Her husband KEN is the same age and wears Hawaiian shirts. He gets out of the van holding a crumpled tissue to his nose - it's been bleeding. He opens the side door of the van, revealing a bagged, gagged, and blindfolded BARBARA. She makes a constant stream of muffled complaints. Ken takes hold of her legs, but she pulls one free and kicks him viciously in the balls. He gasps for breath and doubles over, reeling in intense pain.

KEN
(wheezing for air)
Oh! Huh.....

INT. - KEN AND SANDY' HOUSE - THE HALLWAY - KEN, SANDY, AND BARBARA - A FEW MINUTES LATER

They carry a plump, twisting, squirming Barbara to a door at the end of the hall. Next to the door, on the wall, is an extension speaker. Ken opens the door and turns on a light. They carry her in.

BASEMENT STAIRS

They get two steps down, when Barbara kicks free from their grip and tumbles to the bottom of the stairs.

CLOSE - BARBARA

Dead still.

KEN AND SANDY

They look at each other, terrified, then run down to her aid.

SANDY
(scared to death)
Do you think...she's...dead?

Ken looks close at Barbara, staring, fearing the worst when...WHOOMP!! Barbara kicks Ken in the nose. Ken groans deeply. His nose is bleeding again.

BASEMENT - KEN, SANDY AND BARBARA - A FEW MINUTES LATER

It's a warm, cozy-looking guest room, furnished with an old iron-framed bed, a writing table, a director's chair, and a color TV. Near the TV is a button labeled: PANIC BUTTON.

Ken and Sandy are now wearing DUCK MASKS. Barbara is propped up on a chair. WE CAN HEAR HER MUFFLED, INCOHERENT

CURSING COMING THROUGH THE HOOD AND GAG. Sandy removes Barbara's hood. Barbara is insane with anger. The veins in her neck bulge, her head twists and squirms wildly and her hair sticks out like an electrocution victim. She growls through her gag. Ken chains Barbara's leg to the bed. Sandy removes Barbara's gag. Although still tied up and blindfolded, her mouth is now free and...

BARBARA
(thick, obnoxious, East coast shrill)
YOU FUCKED WITH THE WRONG PERSON!! MY HUSBAND DOES BUSINESS WITH THE MAFIA! WHEN THEY TRACK YOU DOWN, YOU, YOUR ENTIRE FAMILY, AND ANYONE YOU EVER KNEW, WILL ALL GET CHAINSAW ENEMAS!! AND THAT'S NOT ALL...

Sandy pulls the blindfold off. Barbara's looks at her captors.

BARBARA (CONT.)
Oh my god! I've been abducted by...
...Huey and Dewey and...
(she sniffs, suddenly extremely repulsed)
JESUS CHRIST!!! IT SMELLS LIKE A TOILET IN HERE!

KEN
(defensively)
We just cleaned this place up. We scrubbed it for hours, it couldn't...

SANDY
(defensively)
It's the ammonia, that's all it is, you could eat off these floors...

BARBARA
DON'T YOU SCHMUCKS REALIZE I'M A VERY SICK WOMAN, CONSTANTLY IN NEED OF CONSTANT MEDICAL TREATMENT, AND A HIGHLY SPECIALIZED DIET?! MY HUSBAND WORSHIPS THE GROUND I WALK ON. WHEN HE HEARS ABOUT THIS, HE WILL <u>EXPLODE!!!</u>

CUT TO:

INT. - SAM'S MASTER BATHROOM - SAM

POW! WE HEAR THE POP OF A CHAMPAGNE bottle. Sam, drunk with jubilance and champagne, sits on the john (fully clothed), drinking Dom Perignon. He giggles, rises to do a jig, then glances out the backyard window and gasps...

SAM'S POV - THE BACKYARD - UNIFORMED COP

A REDHEADED COP searches the hill near where Sam threw the

chloroform.

SAM

Gesturing wildly.

SAM
No...no...get away from there...go...go...

CLOSE - THE BOTTLE OF CHLOROFORM - CAMERA TILTS UP TO COP

SHOT - SAM

SAM
(increasingly agitated)
Away...away...go away...

CLOSE - BOTTLE OF CHLOROFORM

The officer's plain black shoe steps past the bottle.

SAM AT BATHROOM WINDOW

SAM
(raising hands victoriously)
Atta boy!

CUT TO:

INT.- UNMARKED POLICE CAR PULLING INTO SAM'S DRIVEWAY - LIEUTENANTS WALTERS AND BENDER - LATE AFTERNOON

WALTERS, a Lieutenant in his late thirties, drives the car onto Sam's driveway and parks. Walters and BENDER, a well-dressed Lieutenant in his late forties, get out of the car and head toward the house. Walters eats a pastrami sandwich while Bender enjoys it vicariously.

BENDER
...so how is it?

WALTERS
(takes another bite)
Tastey.

BENDER
"Tastey?" C'mon, elaborate. Exactly WHAT is it you taste?

WALTERS
(like a wine taster)
I taste mustard...salt...and those peppery spices usually acquainted with pastrami.

BENDER
(gasping in ecstasy)
Huhhh...

WALTERS
...and garlic...dill...

BENDER
Let me smell...
(leans over, sniffs sandwich)
Oh my god...

Bender pulls out an aged, well-worn leather covered flask, flicks off the cap and knocks back a swig. They come to a uniformed cop at the front door.

WALTERS
What've we got?

COP
We found some chloroform-soaked handkerchieves stuffed way down in the garbage, and tire print on the lawn...a good one. And we found a few drops of blood in the kitchen.

WALTERS
Where's Mr. Stone?

COP
He's upstairs. I should warn you, he's been drinking. He's...awfully upset.

INT.- SAM'S BATHROOM - SAM

Sam, grinning like a madman, hides the champagne in the linen closet when... WE HEAR A KNOCK ON THE BEDROOM DOOR.

POLICEMAN(THROUGH DOOR)
Mr. Stone, Lt. Bender and Walters are here. They'd like to start as soon as possible.

SAM
(forlorn)
I'll...be there in a moment.

Sam prepares. He dabs a finger on the soap, and then to his eye.

SAM
Yeow!

His eyes tear up like he's been crying for hours. He looks in the mirror, finds his most sorrowful look, then breaks

into uncontrollable giggles for a moment, then regains his composure. He's ready. He exits.

CUT TO:

INT. - KEN AND SANDY'S KITCHEN - KEN AND SANDY

Ken watches the evening news on TV while Sandy prepares dinner for Barbara. She stirs a couple carefully herbed sauces while constantly referring to a cookbook (entitled VEGETARIAN NOUVELLE. A newspaper lays on the table. The headline reads: BEVERLY HILLS HOUSEWIFE KIDNAPPED. Underneath that, a minor headline reads: MA AND PA AX KILLER RELEASED BY MISTAKE. A picture is included - it's the psycho we saw earlier in Ken and Sandy's alley. Ken angrily switches channels.

ANNOUNCER
...in what appears to be the most brazen kidnapping in recent years...

KEN
It's on every goddamn channel! What'd he do? Hire a publicist?

He shuts off the set and sulks. Sandy sits at the table.

SANDY
I feel terrible.
(beat)
Do you feel as guilty as I do?

KEN
Guilty? Are you kidding? You saw that house! We paid for...at least a fourth of that. He cheated us! He owes us!
(points to basement)
And SHE'S his partner! Guilty? No! Pissed off? Yes!
(takes Sandy's hand, pleading)
Sandy, everyone we grew up with drives new cars and lives in beautiful houses. And none of them, NONE OF THEM tried as hard as we have!
(standing up, getting tough)
Were criminals now. The only laws we live by now are our own. There's a key word here - ruthless. Think ruthless.

He begins to belch again, then jumps out of bed and races into the bathroom...WE HEAR THE TOILET SEAT FLIP UP FOLLOWED BY THE SOUND OF KEN VOMITTING.

SANDY
(dryly)
Ken, you're one ruthless son of a bitch.

CUT TO:

LIVING ROOM - WALTERS, BENDER, SAM AND THE SERGEANT - MINUTES LATER

They're all seated except for Walters, who is pacing, looking for overlooked clues. The sergeant munches on a sandwich. Sam is seated and looking woeful. As he speaks, his voice breaks occasionally, but he shams courage and continues on.

SAM
I'm only a businessman. I have no enemies...at least none I know of. I manufacture women's sportswear. It can be a cutthroat at times, but not unlike any other business.

BENDER
Was there anybody here today that you know of servants, maids...?

The redheaded cop (last seen searching over the hill) enters with Muffy in his arms. He takes a seat. Muffy stares at the sergeant's sandwich, and so does Bender. Bender pulls out a flask, takes a swig, then puts it away.

SAM
It's the maid's day off.
(with disbelief)
Are you...drinking?

BENDER
Maalox.
(taps his belly)
Ulcer. Did you notice anything out of the ordinary when you came home?

A damp spot on the carpet catches Walters' eye. He taps the spot with his finger and sniffs.

SAM
(watching Walters)
No, not that I can remember.

BENDER
What time did you come home?

Walters puts his fingers to his lips for a taste.

SAM
(waving for Walters to stop)
The dog...she isn't housetrained properly.

Bender is disgusted. The sergeant stops eating in mid-bite.

WALTERS
No it's...
(tastes it again)
...sweet.

SAM
The dog is...a little diabetic.

WALTERS
I think it's wine or...

SAM
(quickly)
Oh wait, I think I know what that is. You see, I closed a very important business deal today. So when I came home I...opened a bottle of champagne. As I walked through the house with it, celebrating, I called out for Barbara to come and... share the moment with me...
(voice cracking)
She...never came.
(buries head in hands and "sobs" uncontrollably)
Those monsters!

CUT TO:

INT. - KEN AND SANDY'S HALLWAY - CLOSE SHOT - SANDY

She wears a new mask - a monster mask - with scrunched-up facial features, a tall, round, pink bald head. Sandy carries Barbara's dinner on a tray. The meal is lovingly arranged with a variety of vegetables and sauces. The silverware is presented on a crisp, folded, white linen napkin with a small vase holding a freshly-cut rose.

BASEMENT - BARBARA

Barbara grips her leg chain and rattles it fiercely. The door at the top of the stairs opens. Barbara becomes quiet.

BARBARA
(dryly)
Nice mask; you look like a penis.

Sandy places the tray on a TV dinner stand next to Barbara. Barbara leans over and carefully examines the meal.

BARBARA
(incredulously)
No MEAT?!!

BARBARA
(filled with dread, to herself)
Damn! I've been kidnapped by vegetarians.
(takes a bite, spits it back on plate, thoroughly repulsed)
CHRIST!! Where'd you learn to cook? Dachau? I can't eat this crap!

SANDY
(defensively)
It's good for you, it's sorta like...
...vegetarian nouvelle cuisine.

BARBARA
Nouvelle gruel! What do you call this? Boiled slop with herbs? You don't eat this; you flush it!
(picks up the drink and grimaces)
What's this? Crankcase additive? Bathtub schmutz? Pig phelgm?

SANDY
(interrupting)
It's a protein shake.

Barbara tests the drink with an ever so tiny sip. PTUI!! She spits it back in the glass.

SANDY
(almost pleading)
It's good for you, really, it's loaded with natural vitamins, you should try...

BARBARA
(interrupting)
You drink it then.

She holds the drink out for Sandy, but deliberately lets go too soon - dropping the glass to the ground.

BARBARA
Whoopsie daisie! Better get a straw and take advantage of this opportunity. You'll be needing all the nourishment you can get - when you go to jail.

Sandy, at the end of her wits and on the verge of tears, runs towards the stairs.

BARBARA
And the food there; MUCH worse than yours. And sometimes - there's WORMS in it. And when it's REALLY bad, even the WORMS won't eat it!

SANDY
(stops halfway up stairs)
You know, we're trying to be nice to you, we really are. We hate doing this. So you don't have to try to make me feel bad. I feel as bad as a person could possibly feel.

Barbara becomes quiet and introspective. Has Sandy's plea for emotional mercy affected Barbara? Nope.

BARBARA
And then some six foot "female" nurse with a moustache and a face like Broderick Crawford wanted to give me a "check up.
(clears her throat suggestively)
Get the picture? No? Let me be more direct. First of all "Bertha" hasn't showered in twelve years...

Sandy's having an anxiety attack. She runs upstairs and out of the room.

EXT. - SAM'S HOUSE - WALTERS AND BENDER

BENDER
(philosophically)
Why do people do things like that? That man, obviously very much in love with his wife...to disrupt, to possibly destroy a happy enduring marriage is so...reprehensible... what kind of cold, unfeeling, emotionless people would...

INT. - CLOSE ON BOTTLE OF VALIUM - KEN AND SANDY'S BATHROOM

Sandy shakes the bottle but nothing comes out.

HALLWAY

Sandy rushes out of the bathroom, goes to a padlocked door, opens it and rushes in.

SANDY'S WORKROOM - SANDY

There are two (full) clothing racks covered with black plastic, a desk with an industrial sewing machine, a bookcase filled with folded fabrics, different colored threads, folded patterns, and a female tailor's dummy wearing an unfinished, extremely unusual, yet elegant full-length evening gown. Sandy bolts for the desk drawer and takes out her secret stash of valium. She shakes two little blue pills out of the bottle and swallows them.

LIVING ROOM - KEN

Ken's on the couch, his feet on the coffee table, trying to relax. He listens to a record of calming ocean surf. Next to his feet on the table is an album cover that reads - SOUNDS OF THE SEA, and two duck masks. Sandy enters and sits by Ken. She's hyperventilating. Ken sits up.

KEN
Are you alright?

Sandy shakes her head.

BASEMENT - BARBARA

Barbara turns on the tv and flops down on the bed. The bed makes a strange metallic sound.

ANGLE FROM UNDER BED - BARBARA LOOKING UNDER THE BED

Barbara gets down on all fours and looks. One of the legs to the bed frame (to which she is chained) has come loose. She grabs it and jimmies it violently until the leg, the chain and Barbara, are free.

ANOTHER ANGLE - WIDER WITH BARBARA

She pulls her chain close and tiptoes upstairs. She puts her ear to the door. Silence. She opens the door gently.

HALL - BARBARA

Barbara peeks out to see if the coast is clear.

KEN AND SANDY

Ken sees her and instantly holds a mask up to his and Sandy's face. Barbara screams and runs into the kitchen.

KEN
She's out! Get the chloroform!

BARBARA
POLICE! POLICE! SOMEBODY HELP ME!

KITCHEN

Barbara fumbles with the chain lock on the back door - she can't get it open. Ken (now wearing duck mask) rushes in. Barbara picks up the phone and dials O. Ken grabs for the phone. Barbara pulls his hair and kicks him viciously in the shin. Ken goes down in pain.

BARBARA
(to phone)
POLICE! I'VE BEEN KIDNAPPED!
HOW THE HELL DO I KNOW WHERE I AM?!

Ken slides open a drawer and pulls out the pistol. He aims it Barbara. Barbara hangs up the phone.

KEN
That's better.

Sandy comes in (wearing duck mask) with the chloroform and cotton balls. Ken hands Sandy the gun and douses some cotton balls with cholorform. Sandy's hand is shaking wildly and Barbara watches this.

BARBARA
(to Sandy)
BOO!!

This pushes Sandy past her threshold of terror - she gasps a silent scream, drops the gun and runs out...whimpering...

SANDY
I can't do this! I can't do this!

With his free hand, Ken grabs the gun before Barbara can.

KEN
(aiming the gun)
Keep quiet and don't move.

Barbara takes a coffee mug from the sink, throws it and hits Ken right between the eyes. The pain is INCREDIBLE!

KEN
OH!...GOD THAT HURTS!!

Ken instinctively puts the chloroformed soaked cotton wad to the bridge of his nose - realizes his mistake just before it knocks him unconscious and pulls it away. He's woozy. He feebily holds the gun out at her. Barbara then bites his gun hand. Ken howls and drops the gun. Barbara

picks it up, puts it to Ken's head and...pulls the trigger - a little flame pops up in the middle of the gun; it's a cigarette lighter. She drops the gun and picks up the phone. The she grabs a knife from the sink and lunges, but the phone cord catches her around the neck - sending her flat on her back - dropping the knife. Ken pounces on Barbara and hangs up the phone..

BARBARA
(screaming)
HELP, I'M BEING MURDERED!

Ken puts the cotton balls over Barbara's nose. Barbara then grabs Ken in the balls and twists. Ken yells but the pain eases as Barbara slides in unconsciousness.

BEDROOM - MINUTES LATER

Ken, holding a tissue to his nose, comes in to find Sandy curled up on the bed, shaking in fear. He lays her down with her head in his lap and massages her temples. He then proceeds into what is apparently a normal routine.

KEN
All right. Close your eyes.

She closes her eyes, but she still breathes rapidly.

KEN
You're at the most elegant fashion salon in Paris. They're introducing your fall line. There's Dom Perignon and Beluga caviar on ice, and the place is packed with eager buyers. Then...in walks...the enemy...

SANDY
(frightened)
Bertha?

KEN
Bertha? No. Yves St. Laurent, Oleg Cassini, Mario Valentino, Halston; they've all come to steal your ideas...

SANDY
(smiles, caught up in the fantasy)
Those bastards...

KEN
...the rules are no photographs. But your assistant Max catches Oscar De La Renta with a camera and asks him to leave...

SANDY
Hasta la vista, Oscar.

CUT TO:

INT. - CAROL FARNSWORTH'S BEDROOM - CLOSE SHOT - CAROL AND EARL

EARL is 30-ish, well-built, handsome and dumb. They are noisely making love in bed when we HEAR THE FRONT DOOR BELL. Carol stops, breaking character instantly.

EARL
(Texan drawl)
Who's that, Cassandra?

Carol gets out of bed and puts on a robe.

CAROL
How the hell should I know?

ENTRY HALL - FRONT DOOR - CAROL

She looks through her peephole.

CAROL
(to herself)
Sam!

She rushes back to the bedroom.

BEDROOM - CAROL AND EARL

Carol rushes in and yanks Earl out of bed.

CAROL
It's Sam!

EARL
Do I kill him now?

CAROL
Not now, you idiot, after I marry him.

Carol pushes Earl into the closet and throws his clothes under the bed.

ENTRY HALL - CAROL

She lets Sam in. He snaps his fingers, does a jig, then grabs her and kisses her passionately. She's confused.

CAROL
What're you doing here?

SAM
Haven't you heard? It's all over the papers and the TV. (CONT.)

SAM (CONT.)
(jubilantly)
Barbara's been kidnapped! They're going to kill her!

CAROL
What do you mean?

Sam leads her into the living room and towards the bar.

LIVING ROOM

The living room is exotically furnished with huge palms and a sunken floor. It's on the gaudy side: like the tastes of an expensive call girl.

SAM
They said "Call the police and we'll kill her, call the media and we'll kill her, don't show with the dough and we'll kill her" - So I called the police, the city news desk and I'm not going anywhere NEAR the ransom drop! Hell! They'll have to kill her at least three times!!

Carol embraces Sam. Then Sam goes to the refrigerator, takes out a bottle of champagne and works at the cork.

CAROL
But if you don't show up, won't that look suspicious to the police?

SAM
(proudly)
I'll show up - at the wrong place! The ransom is supposed to be delivered to a phone booth near Wilshire and La Brea. I threw the cops off by miles. I told them it was a laundry in the VALLEY.

CAROL
Do you think they're really kill her?

SAM
Bite your tongue, Carol, there's honor amongst thieves!
(leads her towards the bedroom)
Let's celebrate before I go back to work; Let's have a quicky.

CAROL
Why...must we always do it in the bedroom?
(drops her robe seductively)
Let's do it....right here.

SAM
You want to do it right here? On the goddamn floor?

CAROL
Why not?

SAM
(smiling)
I love you Carol
(suddenly, excitedly)
I forgot to tell you!!
(the champagne pops open and Sam explodes joyously)
THEY FOUND BLOOD! TYPE O BLOOD! BARBARA'S TYPE!
(suddenly, ecstatic)
THEY MIGHT HAVE KILLED HER ALREADY!
(approaching Carol, loosening his belt)
This has been greatest day of my life.

CUT TO:

INT. - KEN AND SANDY'S BEDROOM

Ken lays on the bed, reading the newspaper accounts of the kidnapping. Scared and vulnerable, Sandy crawls under the covers and nestles up against her husband.

SANDY
This is the worst day of my life.

THE PHONE RINGS. Ken answers.

KEN
Hello?
(angrily)
Isn't this a little late to be calling?
(beat)
That's right, we sent a dollar to all the collection agencies. We promised to send whatever we could afford.
(beat)
No, it wasn't meant to be funny, unfortunately it just turned out that way.
(beat)
Same to you. Goodbye.

SANDY
Tod left a message - he can't deliver the paper unless he gets paid.

Ken tries to ignore this.

SANDY
Do you think she's as sick as she says?

KEN
Sandy. Trust me. There are no out-patient leper colonies in Beverly Hills.

SANDY
What about her special diet?

KEN
Nobody suffers from an acute lobster deficiency.

CUT TO:

INT. - CAROL'S - CAROL FROM EARL'S POV - LATER THAT EVENING

The closet door slides open and we see Carol - thoroughly disheveled - she looks like a woman who's just been... She takes Earl by the hand and leads him to the bed.

EARL
What happened, Cassandra? I heard you talking and then I didn't hear anything for 30 minutes.
(suspiciously)
Did you screw him?

Carol pushes him down on the bed and crawls on top of him.

CAROL
(dryly)
No. He was showing me how to sink a putt.

EARL
Really? With one of those little things that makes a buzz when the ball goes in the hole?

CAROL
(beat)
That's right.

EARL
Huh. And why did he call you "Carol"?

CAROL
(beat)
Carol is short for Cassandra. You didn't know that?

EARL
Nope.

THE PHONE RINGS. Carol answers.

CAROL
Hello?

JOHN (THROUGH PHONE)
Tamara?

INT. - KEN AND SANDY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

They're both asleep. Sandy's having a nightmare. She tosses and turns so heavily - her hand whacks Ken in the face, waking him up. He wakes her up.

KEN
What were you dreaming about?

SANDY
We got caught and I was in jail and Squeaky Fromme was my cellmate. And Bertha...

KEN
(interrupting, he pulls her close, comforting)
There's nothing to worry about. Everything went perfectly. Nobody saw us, and we didn't leave any clues.

INT. POLICE STATION - SOMEWHERE IN THE POLICE LAB - TECHNICIAN - EARLY THE NEXT MORNING.

A technician in a white lab coat sits at a desk checking tire prints. On his right is a large loose-leaf book holding hundreds of different tire print patterns. On his left is an x-ray size negative photograph of a tire print labeled BARBARA STONE CASE # 349687 7-08-85.

ANGLE ON SHELF

The shelf is filled with notebooks, each one marked with name of a different tire manufacturer. He returns a book labeled BF GOODRICH and takes one labeled BRIDGESTONE.

BASEMENT - BARBARA - LATER THAT DAY

Barbara is writing in some kind of journal. Sandy descends the stair and lays half a dozen fashion magazines on the bed. We cannot see Sandy's mask.

SANDY
I brought you some more fashion magazines.

Barbara looks up and gasps when she sees...

SANDY

She's wearing a "Screaming Skull" mask - a horribly mutated face with a detachable dangling eyeball and dayglo orange fright wig. Sandy picks up the lunch tray.

SANDY
(proudly)
It's a good one, isn't it?

Barbara shakes her head and returns to her writing. Sandy matter-of-factly brushes the dangling eyeball away like a wisp of out-of-place hair. She tries to be friendly.

SANDY
I think that's a good idea - keeping a journal. Who knows? That journal might turn into a best seller!

BARBARA
(not looking up)
Don't be an idiot. How long do you plan on keeping me down here?

SANDY
As soon as Mr. Stone pays the ransom. Should be Tuesday.

BARBARA
Good. I'd hate to miss my lunch group or my weekly dietician appointment.

SANDY
Why? Do you need medication?

BARBARA
I must get a urine injection.

SANDY
(repulsed)
You have...urine...injected? WHY?

BARBARA
(quickly)
It promotes weight loss.

SANDY
That's GROSS. Does it work?

Barbara ignores Sandy, rips three pages from the journal and hands them to Sandy.

SANDY
Lazlo thigh and breast cream, sperm whale oil, royal queen bee jelly...
(looks at another list)
Pickled quail's eggs? Frog legs provencal...
(to Barbara)
I can't get you these things; we can't afford it.

BARBARA
That's your problem, not mine. Supply these things and I will tell the jury you acted humanely.
(hard sell)
It might make the difference between life...
(dramatically)
...and DEATH.

BARBARA

Barbara then acts out the highlights of an electric chair execution complete with choking, electrical shock sounds, tongue wagging and bulging eyes.

CUT TO:

EXT. - KEN AND SANDYS HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - EARLY MORNING

The Sunday paper is delivered to his neighbor's porch, but the paper boy skips Ken and Sandy's.

INT - KEN AND SANDY'S BEDROOM

The clock reads 5:30. The alarm goes off. Ken gets up. He doesn't want to do what he has to do.

SANDY
What's the matter?

KEN
It's a constant weekly reminder that my life has been one failure after another.

SANDY
You're not a failure. It's not your fault. You're just...
(strong emphasis)
...INCREDIBLY unlucky.

KEN
It's just so...depressing.

CUT TO:

EXT. - SWAP MEET - KEN

Ken sits at his booth, his van parked behind him. His booth is a veritable museum of past-their-prime products that went bust in the seventies, including (new-in-the-box!) 4 and 8 track car stereos, slinkies, pet rocks, macrame kits and LOTS of spandex pants in all colors. There is also a plethora of Halloween masks. A shoe polish sign reads; SPANDEX PANTS $5 2 PAIRS FOR $8. HALLOWEEN MASKS $2- $25 To his left and right are crowded boothes selling old hubcaps, and (to his left) a booth selling cheap auto tools and $5 digital watches. Ken's booth is vacant. Then a well-coiffed young man in a FERRARI tee shirt walks past with a spirited bounce. He stops, looks at Ken, continues, stops again and finally comes over to the booth. He looks Ken straight in the eye andpoints his finger at him. Ken looks uncomfortable.

FRIEND
Ken...Kessler.

Ken doesn't know what to say.

FRIEND
You don't remember me? Auto shop. Mike Londel. Well whatever happened to you?

Ken smiles. He remembers. He stands and shakes hands with this exuberant, obnoxious, highpowered "old friend".

KEN
(shrugging - hates this question)
Oh...not much. How about you?

FRIEND
(looking over booth)
I heard you went to law school.

KEN
Yeah...
(dismissing it)
....I didn't want to be an attorney.

FRIEND
So...you got into the highly lucrative obsolesence business?

KEN
This represents two stages in a series of extremely untimely business adventures.
(bad subject - he's embarassed)
Yeah...uh..sort of. So what're you doing with yourself?

FRIEND
I'm...sort of an attorney. Criminal law, doing real well.
(pointing to tee shirt)
Got SEVEN of these!

KEN
Seven Tee shirts - wow!

FRIEND
Seven cars smart ass.
(notices girlfriend approaching)
Oh, here comes the baby. Gotta go.
(hands Ken his card)
Give me a call if you ever get arrested.

Ken laughs it off.

FRIEND
(walking away)
Stay out of trouble.

KEN
(to himself)
Too late for that...asshole.

CAMERA FOLLOWS FRIEND

She's pretty, in her 20's. He puts his arm around her possessively.

FRIEND
That was interesting. He was one those "stars" in high school. Popular, big surfer, swim team captain, pretty girlfriend, most likely to succeed, ALL that stuff. I was a nerd. I wanted to be just like him.
(laughs viciously)
I always thought it'd be funny to see one of those guys end up like that.

KEN AND SANDY'S KITCHEN - KEN AND SANDY - EVENING

Sandy prepares another wonderful-looking vegetarian dinner tray for Barbara. Ken sits in a chair and watches her.

SANDY
(complaining)
She HATES me. No matter what I do, or as nice as I can be - she just tears into me. I feel terrible. I want her to like me.

KEN
Sandy, you're her kidnapper, she's not supposed to like you.

This upsets Sandy more.

SANDY
I really don't like doing this, Ken.
(beat)
Will you bring this to her?

Ken picks up the tray and heads towards the basement.

BASEMENT - BARBARA

Barbara stands in a corner brandishing a lamp as Ken (wearing a fly mask) comes downstairs with her dinner. When he reaches the bottom, Barbara swings the lamp at his head. Ken ducks, and the lamp smashes into the wall. Barbara then throws a folding chair at him, which misses him and bangs along the ground. She continues the assault by throwing a book at Ken, who blocks the book with the tray, spilling the food all over the mask.

KEN
No dinner for you then.

BARBARA
Ah gee whiz, that really hurts. I'm a real aficionado of death camp cuisine.

KEN
As long as you're here, why don't you you just..."pretend" to be a guest?

BARBARA
(exploding)
A GUEST?
(rattling her chain fiercely)
DO YOU ALWAYS CHAIN YOUR GUESTS TO THE BED YOU FUCKING MORON?! A GUEST?! HOW DO YOU INVITE YOUR 'GUESTS' TO A (CONT.

BARBARA (CONT.)
DINNER PARTY?! AT GUN POINT?! WHERE'D YOU LEARN SOCIAL ETIQUETTE?! THE MARQUIS DE SADE?!)

KEN
Is this "pre-menstrual stress"?

Ken turns, walking away, thinking he's had the last laugh. Barbara calms and gives Ken a wolf-whistle.

BARBARA
Nice butt, that's what they'll say.

KEN
(stops by the stairs)
I beg your pardon?

BARBARA
Nice butt. That's what they'll say, on your first day. In "The Men's Club".

KEN
Men's club?

BARBARA
Yeah...the San Quentin Country Club. With a cute little rear end like that - your dance card'll be "filled" over and over and over again, until the end of the prom.

KEN
(pretends delight)
Oh stop, you bitch; you're torturing me.

Ken turns with and swivel-hips to the stairs.

BARBARA
Fuck you, sweet cheeks.

KEN
(turns, straight-voiced)
You're very good at this. You...
...should write children's books.

Ken goes up the stairs, wiggling his behind and exits. Barbara looks around for something to do. She turns on the TV. She flips through a few channels, and stops on a cooking show.

CUT TO:

INT. - KEN AND SANDY'S BEDROOM - THAT NIGHT

Ken and Sandy are in bed, about to fall asleep, when...we HEAR BARBARA'S PANIC BUTTON BLARE. It's the theme to Alfred Hitchcock Presents. Ken gets up with a jerk and turns on the light.

SANDY
Will you get it?

KEN
(getting up, cranky)
You're going to have to deal with her eventually.

BASEMENT

Barbara has the TV on - she's been watching all night. She's on the bed, smoking a cigarette. Ken comes down.

KEN
What's the matter?

BARBARA
(holding up an empty cigarette carton)
Down to the last pack.

KEN
I'll get you some tommorrow.

BEDROOM - KEN AND SANDY

Ken comes back to find Sandy asleep - tossing and turning - she's in the middle of a nightmare.

SANDY
(mumbling)
Bertha...no...

KEN
(whispers in Sandy's ear)
Bertha! This is the warden. Stay away from that girl or I'll shoot you.

Sandy smiles with relief. Bertha has retreated.

DISSOLVE TO:

BASEMENT - BARBARA - - VERY EARLY THAT MORNING

Barbara's been up all night. The TV is on with the farm report while she studies a fashion magazine. She turns the page and she smiles - she likes that one.

INSERT - MAGAZINE

A tall slinky blond in a full lenth gown. THEN WE SEE BARBARA'S FACE ON THE MODEL.

BARBARA

She smiles, delighted with the fantasy.

INSERT MAGAZINE

Now the face stays and so does the gown, but this time with Barbara's body. The gown...well...something's been lost.

BARBARA

The smile fades and she turns the page. She takes the last cigarette from a pack and lights it. The farm report ends and an aerobics show comes on. Barbara glances briefly at the TV and sees two slinky women going through aerobics. Her eyes immediately return to the magazine. She flips another page and another. The music is bouncy, infectious, inspirational. Her big toe starts to twitch. Then the whole foot "taps". Then her other foot joins in. She looks at the TV and puts the magazine down. She leans back, watches a little more, then extinguishes her last cigarette. Finally Barbara gets up and joins in with the exercise. While keeping in rhythm with the music and the instructor, she groans...

BARBARA

uh...uh...uh...uh...uh...uh...uh...uh

She gives up and flops on the bed; exhausted, and out of breath.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATION - SOMEWHERE IN THE POLICE LAB - THE TECHNICIAN - EARLY IN THE MORNING

Still checking the tire prints. He flips a page and... ...voila! He finds an identical matching tire print. The technician breathes a sigh of relief and satisfaction. He flips a Rolodex to Yokohama, pulls up a phone and dials.

TECHNICIAN
Hello. This is Sergeant Blake from the LAPD police science lab. I'd like a purchase search of YOKOHAMA model NXP.
(beat)
Yes. All of L.A. County.

KITCHEN - KEN AND SANDY - MORNING

Ken is leaving. Sandy's wearing a waitress' uniform. She sits at the table. She looks tired and terrified.

SANDY
What if he doesn't show?

KEN
Then you get to keep her.
(getting up)
Wish me luck. I'll call you.

Sandy gets very emotional. She embraces him tightly for a long time, then lets him go.

KEN
Don't worry, he'll show up. It's his wife.

Ken gives her a kiss and leaves. Sandy watches him through the window.

SANDY
PLEASE, don't get caught.

CUT TO:

EXT. - PHONE BOOTH - KEN

Ken, wearing dark sunglasses and nondescript clothing, is on the phone calling Sam. He's extremely anxious.

CUT TO:

EXT. - PHONE BOOTH ON CORNER OF WILSHIRE AND LA BREA - 11 A.M.

The phone rings and rings and rings. Nobody is there.

BACK TO KEN

Ken grows anxious as he waits for Sam to answer.

KEN
(to himself)
Where are you Sam? You son-of-a-bitch!

CUT TO:

INT. - SAM'S FOYER - SAM, BENDER, WALTERS, THE REDHEADED COP AND ASSORTED UNIFORMED COPS

They're making harried preparations for the (decoy) ransom

payoff. A briefcase filled with marked bills is closed and handed to Sam.

BEDNER
Alright, let's go.

They all turn to leave when the phone rings. The redheaded cop answers it and waves to Sam.

REDHEAD
(covering phone)
Mr. Stone - telephone.

Walter and Bender look to Sam. Sam answers the phone.

KEN
Mr. Stone, we had a meeting...

SAM
(interrupting)
Hang on, will ya Harry? The police are ready to record our conversation. Why don't you call me on my office line? 470-7583.
(to cops)
Business associate.

The cops relax.

SAM'S OFFICE - SAM

THE PHONE IS RINGING. Sam coms in and grabs the phone.

SAM
Hello?

KEN
Mr. Stone, why have you failed to appear at the designated...uh... destination?

Sam doesn't know what to tell him.

SAM
Uh...I uh...just couldn't make it.

KEN
Can you talk freely?

SAM
Sure, I can talk.

KEN
The cops are there aren't they?

To reply affirmatively would be in violation of one the kidnapper's rules.

SAM
That's right, the cops are here. Reporters too.

KEN
Alright Mr. Stone, I'm a reasonable man. I'll give you one more chance. We will re-schedule our rendez-vous for next Monday. Do you understand?

SAM
(disappointedly)
You're re-scheduling?

SAM
Yes I am.

KEN
Any questions?

SAM
Nope.

KEN
Good.

SAM
So...she's still alive?

KEN
She's in perfect health.

Sam mouthes the word "damn".

SAM
In our previous discussion, you mentioned that you would...uh...kill my wife if procedure was not followed accurately.

KEN
That is correct.

SAM
And that still goes?

KEN
Definitely..

At that point Sam spots Muffy behind a chair, sniffing around, looking for a warm place to...

SAM
Hmmm...uh...how would you do it?
How would you kill her?

KEN
(tough sounding)
A bullet through the head at close range.

SAM
(nodding with assured satisfaction)
That would do it, no question about it. Well...you've got me convinced.

He opens a desk drawer and pulls out a big, ugly handgun about the size of Muffy.

KEN
Until Monday then.

SAM
Until Monday.

The phone disconnects.

MUFFY

Muffy has found the right spot. She circles, sniffs, then arches her back when...

SAM

Sam takes straight-armed aim at the dog.

SAM
(Clint Eastwood-ly)
Go ahead...make my day.

Muffy looks at Sam for a moment and then...continues...

FOYER - WALTERS, BENDER, AND THE REST OF THE COPS

WALTERS
We're running late, I hope he's not in there shooting the shit because...

BLAM! Sam fired! They all look toward Sam's office.

REDHEADED COP
Oh my god. He killed himself!

THE HALL TO SAM'S OFFICE

THE BAR - SANDY AND THE BARTENDER - A FEW MINUTES LATER

BARTENDER
So what'd he say?

SANDY
I didn't talk to him. Someone's picking me up. They'll take me to him.

The bartender smiles. Another relationship saved. He looks at the TV. The news is on showing a photo of the psycho with the caption; MA AND PA AX KILLER - HAS HE KILLED AGAIN?

BARTENDER
Mind if I turn up the news?

Sandy shrugs. He turns up the sound. Sandy stares blankly at the TV. Behind her, we see two uniformed cops come in.

THE TV

Behind the newscaster is a graphic that reads: KIDNAPPING

ANNOUNCER
A suspect is in custody in connection with the Stone kidnapping. Thirty-two year old Michael Nastore of Jersey City, New Jersey, was arrested while allegedly trying to collect the $100,000 ransom ...

We see a clip of Sam's would-be robber being led from the squad car to the station. He mugs for the camera.

ANNOUNCER
Nastore is currently on probation in that state for a petty-theft offense.

CLOSE - SANDY

Dumbstruck, she quickly gathers up her belongings. Still tipsy, Sandy gets up, turns, takes but two steps, sees the police...

SANDY
Whoops.

...and then turns and walks directly to the bathroom.

BATHROOM - SANDY

She looks around for a vent window. There is none. She exits.

MEN'S BATHROOM

Sandy enters, ignoring the embarassed man using the urinal. She looks for a window. There is no window. Sandy exits.

THE BAR - BARTENDER, COPS, ANONYMOUS WOMAN SITTING IN BOOTH

One cop talks to a woman in a booth, while the other stands by the front door. Sandy crosses the bar and goes for the door.

COP NEAR THE DOOR
Excuse me, miss, did you phone for the police a few minutes ago?

SANDY
No...
(smiling fondly at the bartender)
...I called my husband.

COP
(cordially)
Thank you.

Sandy leaves.

POLICE STATION - INTERROGATION ROOM - WALTERS, BENDER, AND THE MUGGER

MUGGER
...I'm telling ya, I don't even got a car! How da hell do I kidnap some broad? Wit a cab? Strap her on my back? Where da hell would I keep her? I been sleepin' at the mission all week! Call them!

INT. KEN AND SANDY'S KITCHEN - EARLY EVENING

Ken is at the sink, washing some freshly-tossed protein drink out of his hair. Sitting on the table is a protein-drink-covered-Darth Vader mask. Sandy stumbles in, still very drunk and very happy to see Ken. She throws her arms around Ken, nuzzles his ear and unbuttons his shirt.

SANDY
(seductive phoney french accent)
I want to make love with you.

KEN
(he knows the signs)
You've been drinking. Why have you been drinking?

Muffy tears out of Sam's office, spinning out on the marble floor. She runs to the redheaded cop and jumps into his arms. She is scared but unharmed.

FOYER - THE COPS

They rush to Sam's office.

OFFICE - SAM, ET AL

They rush in to find Sam standing there holding the gun, with his most innocent "gee, I dunno what happened" look.

SAM
It just...went off.

CUT TO:

EXT. - PHONE BOOTH BEHIND LAUNDRY IN VALLEY

Sam waits in the telephone booth, faking anxious anticipation.

UP ON THE ROOF - WALTERS, BENDER, AND ASSORTED POLICEMAN

Both Walters and Bender watch Sam through high-powered binoculars. With them they've got snipers in swat team gear aiming high powered rifles with telescopic sights.. Other cops have telephones and radios. Walters eats a sandwich.

WALTERS
...the bread is right, the rye seeds properly pungent, but the crust is...
...a little limp.

BENDER
I know. It should be a little chewy.
(checks his watch)
I think we better call him.

Bender puts his binoculars down and turns to a uniformed officer with a radio phone.

PHONE BOOTH - SAM

THE PHONE RINGS. Sam's surprised. He answers it.

SAM
Hello?

BENDER(THROUGH PHONE)
This is Bender. They're over an hour late. If they're not here by now, I don't think they're going to show. (CONT.)

BENDER (THOUGH PHONE) (CONT.)
Why don't you go home, we'll have an unmarked car follow you.

SAM
Thanks.

Sam, feeling confident, hangs up and leaves the booth. He takes but three steps when a man in an old army jacket grabs him by the lapels, shoves him into the shadows and presses a knife against Sam's belly.

MUGGER
(thick Jersey accent)
Gimme your fuckin' money, old man.
(he presses the knife harder)
I'll kill you. C'mon! c'mon!

Sam hands him the briefcase.

MUGGER
Give me your wallet! Or I'll stick this all the way back to your spine!

Sam hands him the wallet.

SAM
Sure.

MUGGER
Gimme your watch! C'mon!

Sam gives him the watch. The mugger turns to run, but finds himself surrounded by a dozen well-disguised undercover policemen with guns drawn and aimed. He freezes. He is VERY surprised. And impressed.

MUGGER
(thick Jersey accent)
Dis town's got some police force!

CUT TO:

INT. RAY'S COFFEE SHOP - SANDY - THAT AFTERNOON

Sandy works as a waitress in a small but busy coffee shop in West L.A. She delivers some ketchup to four secretaries in a booth. She passes two middle-aged businessmen in the next booth on the way back.

SANDY
You're coming right up...

She picks up two plates and serves the businessmen.

BUSINESSMAN 1
(to his friend)
I heard on the radio they just caught that kidnapper.

The plate hits the table a little hard.

SANDY
Excuse me.

Overwhelmed with anxiety, Sandy tries to compose herself. She turns to leave, glancing out the window.

SANDY'S POV - OUTSIDE

Two uniformed police officers get out of a squad car and head towards the coffee shop.

SANDY

She stops, turns, and rushes into the supply room.

SUPPLY ROOM - SANDY

The room is filled with commercial size cans of vegetables, powdered potatoes, napkins, etc. She waits, building courage, until finally, she peeks out the door.

SANDY'S POV - THE COPS AND THE CASHIER

The cashier points toward Sandy.

SANDY

She shuts the door and looks for an alternate exit.

OUTSIDE THE DOOR

One of the cops steps up to use a pay phone outside of the supply room. He puts in a quarter and dials.

COP
It's me - can you talk?

SUPPLY ROOM - SANDY

She sees a small ventilation window. She tries to open it, but it only opens an inch. She tries harder, panicking and on the verge of tears. Then she jimmies it open, pulls herself up, and barely squeezes herself through.

EXT. - WINDOW - SANDY

She falls to the alley below and takes off at a run.

EXT. - BUSY STREET - SANDY - AN HOUR LATER

Wandering in a daze, she finds herself outside a bar. She goes in.

INT. - BAR - SANDY

It's dark, seedy, and nearly empty. A TV over the bar is on, the sound turned low. Sandy walks back to use the phone. She fumbles through her purse for a quarter, puts it in, and dials.

INT. - KEN AND SANDY'S KITCHEN INSERT - CLOSE SHOT - TELEPHONE

It rings and rings and rings.

BASEMENT - KEN

Barbara's doing aerobics. Ken drops a a box of cigarettes on the bed.

KEN
Here's your cigarettes.

BARBARA
I quit.

SANDY AT THE BAR

She hangs up, depressed, and walks back to the bar. A fatherly-looking bartender comes over. Sandy stares at the bar top and says nothing.

BARTENDER
Personally, I don't believe in ESP. Why don't you tell me what you want?

SANDY
(not looking up)
Tequila shooter...a beer.

SANDY - TWENTY MINUTES LATER

The bartender gives her another round of tequila, and beer. Sandy downs the tequila shooter, chases it with a beer. She's drunk. They've been talking.

BARTENDER
Just a hunch, but is something troubling you.

SANDY
My husband went away today...for a long time.

BARTENDER
Miss him already?

SANDY
(with tears in her voice)
Yeah. I didn't even get to say goodbye.

BARTENDER
He gonna be gone very long?

Sandy nods her head, a tear rolls down. She's feeling her drinks. She wavers a bit on her stool.

BARTENDER
Let me ask you something: Do you love him?

SANDY
Yes.

Sandy teeters and starts to fall. The bartender reaches out to grab her, but she corrects herself. The bartender, while keeping an eye on Sandy, takes a quarter from the register, and places it on the bar in front of her.

BARTENDER
Do us both a favor; Call him, go with him, while you can. Before you fall off the stool.

Sandy starts to teeter over again, but corrects herself before he can help. She stares at the quarter a moment, then finishes the tequila, picks up the quarter, walks to the pay phone, and dials O.

SANDY
Operator, could you get me the police?

INT. - POLICE STATION - INTERROGATION ROOM - THE MUGGER, WALTERS, AND BENDER - A FEW MINUTES LATER

MUGGER
(stunned with terror)
My wife?!!! A big fat broad?
She's here...in L.A.?

BENDER
Yep. She just called in. They're going to pick her up now.

MUGGER
(mumbling to himself)
Diss is a fuckin' nightmare!

SANDY
You're not only smart, mister...
(pinches Ken on ass)
...you've got a cute butt, too.

KEN
("cute butt..."?)
Wha...? Why did you say that?

She pulls him away from the sink, pulls him onto the kitchen table, crawls on top and kisses him endlessly.

KEN
Christ, are you ever drunk!
(beat)
Why are you drunk?

SANDY
I quit my job...

KEN
What? Why? We need the money!

SANDY
...and then I called the cops to come and pick me up.

Ken is stunned.

KEN
You what?!

His look drives Sandy into sudden intense hysterical laughter. She falls to the floor, taking the Darth Vader mask with her. She tries to catch her breath, then notices the protein drink on the mask and breaks into laughter all over again. Ken smiles, humoring her.

KEN
What's so funny, Sandy? Please, tell me the funny part.

SANDY
Alright...

She takes a deep breath to continue the story, then her eyes roll upward, and she passes out, falling off the chair. THE DOORBELL RINGS.

LIVING ROOM

Ken goes to the door and looks through the peephole.

KEN' POV - TWO POLICEMEN

BACK TO KEN

KEN

Jesus, Sandy!

While in a state of controlled panic, he opens the door. His hair is wet, and there's protein drink on his shirt.

COP

Ken Kessler?

Ken nods yes.

COP

Mr. Kessler, we're from the Los Angeles Police Science Lab. We're trying to locate a vehicle involved in a felony which left a tire imprint identified as a Yokohama NXP. We're out taking prints of the tire - molds actually, of all the model NXP's sold in the Los Angeles area...

BACK TO SANDY

She regains consciousness, finding herself eye-to-eye with the Darth Vader mask.

BACK TO KEN AND COPS.

KEN

You want to make a mold?

COP

Exactly.

(beat)

We need your permission.

Ken hesitates. Sandy breaks the tension.

SANDY (OFFSCREEN)

Hey! Darth Vader...!

KEN

(smiling weakly)

My wife - she's a little drunk...

SANDY (OFFSCREEN)

(breaking into the giggles)

...Princess Leia wants to lay-ya...

KEN

...she lost her job today.

SANDY (OFFSCREEN)
(giggling hysterically)
...and don't forget to bring your light sword!

KEN
(yelling)
Just a moment, your highness. I'm talking to the police right now.

SANDY (OFFSCREEN)
I just LOVE that light sword!

KEN
Where were we? You want to make a mold of my tires? I... can't see why not. The car's on the other side of the house.

SANDY
(pounding floor, cheering)
My wookie wants some nookie!
My wookie wants some nookie!
My wookie wants some nookie!

COP
(winking)
Why don't you go ahead. I don't think we'll need you.
(indicating his partner)
The force is with me.

WE HEAR SOMETHING CRASH IN THE KITCHEN

KITCHEN - KEN AND SANDY

The place is a mess. Ken rushes in to find Sandy pouring a bottle of Stolichnaya vodka all around the glass, missing it. Ken takes the bottle and stands up to put it away. As he opens a cupboard (that literally filled with Stolichnaya bottles), Sandy pinches him on the ass.

SANDY
Oooo-Darthie, you're a cutie without your mask.

Ken turns back to her.

KEN
(very firmly)
There are policemen outside our house and they're molding my tires. Tell me what you told them.

SANDY
(wrapping her legs around him)
Sandy want sex! Then Sandy talk!

Ken grabs her and shakes her shoulders.

KEN
Didn't you hear me? POLICE. The POLICE are outside our house. Tell me EXACTLY what you told them.

It sinks in and Sandy's smile turns into horror.

SANDY
Okay...

She starts to take a deep breath. Ken tries to stop her.

KEN
No! Don't take a breath! You might...

Too late - Sandy falls over, passed out again. Ken throws his hands up in the air in frustration, then goes into the...

BEDROOM

...and looks out window.

KENS POV - COPS BY THE CAR

They've cleaned a section of the tire and sprayed it with a thin water-based oil. Then they take a clay-like substance and push it into the tire's grooves.

BEDROOM - KEN

Getting very nervous. He goes into the bathroom. Sandy comes in and flops on the bed. She looks over at the bathroom.

BATHROOM

Ken kneels by the commode.

SANDY
Ken, are you getting "ruthless" again?

KEN
No, I'm getting suicidal.

SANDY
(giggling hysterically)
What're you going to do...?
Drown yourself in the toilet?

CUT TO:

BEDROOM - KEN AND SANDY - LATER THAT EVENING

Ken is pacing. Sandy's in bed, eyes half closed and

moaning from a very bad hangover. She looks awful. Ken hands her a bucket which she clutches like a security blanket.

SANDY
(reveling in her misery)
Everything's going terribly! The police are molding our tires, the phone company's shutting off the phone, we're almost out of food, we don't have any money....I lost my job...and..
(embarassed)
...Barbara has yet to have a bowel movement...

Ken curls up with Sandy.

KEN
We'll get the money in couple days. If we don't, I'll kill myself and let you collect insurance.

SANDY
I don't want to do that. Can we let her go?

KEN
No. .

CUT TO:

INT. - BASEMENT - BARBARA - MORNING

Barbara watches an aerobics show while nibbling at her breakfast. Then she begrudgingly gets up and joins in. She still "uh uh uh uh's" after each movement, but she manages to endure more exercise before plopping down on the bed.

INT. - HALLWAY - KEN

Ken opens the false wall/door to Barbara's basement.

BARBARA(OFFSCREEN)
(furious panic)
STAY THE HELL OUT OF HERE!! I'M USING THE JOHN!!

Ken closes the door and as he walks off...

KEN
Sandy! Good news!

HALLWAY - KEN - LATER

He opens the door holding Barbara's lunch tray.

KEN
(parent-ily)
Are you finished?

BARBARA
Yes.

KEN
Good!

BARBARA
(meeting the challenge)
Why don't you hand out cigars? It's a boy - and I think you're the father; the resemblence is uncanny.

CUT TO:

INT. - SAM'S BEDROOM - MORNING - SAM

Sam is in bed, asleep, with a smile on his face. Sam's alarm clock goes off. The smile disappears and Sam is awake. He gets up, swings his feet off the bed, almost steps in something and jerks his feet back up.

SAM
Goddamn that dog!

HALLWAY - NEAR STAIRS - SAM

Sam's heads out of his bedroom when he sees Muffy trotting through the house downstairs.

SAM
YOU.
(lowers voice so doessn't want cops to hear)
Your days are numbered, pal. I'm going to get another dog.
(grinning viciously)
A BIG dog.

CUT TO:

INT. - SAM'S OFFICE AT WORK - DAY

Sam's busy on the phone.

SAM
...do we have to give him a gold watch? Fuck him. What did he ever do for me?
(beat)
He did?

(CONT.)

SAM (CONT.)
(beat)
He did?
(beat)
Fuck him anyways.

Sam hangs up. He starts to think, then slams his fist hard on his desk.

SAM
Damn that dog! How could I miss? Ten feet away and I MISS! JESUS!

INTERCOM BUZZES. Sam holds the button down.

SAM
Yes?

SECRETARY
There's a Carol Farnsworth to see you.

SAM
Send her in.

Carol saunters in wearing a floor length fur coat and spikey high heels. She glides over to Sam's side of the desk. Sam is still preoccupied with missing the dog.

CAROL
(dripping sex)
Happy birthday, Sam. I brought you your present.

SAM
Oh yeah?
(he looks her over, looking for a gift box, but she has none)
Where is it?

Carol sits on the desk in front of Sam, puts her heels on his armrests, and loosens her coat. She is naked underneath.

CAROL
It's right here, Sam.

SAM
(smiles, but thinking about the dog)
Oooh...

CAROL
Does it...meet your satisfaction? Is there...anything else you might like?

(beat)

SAM
How about a...BIG dog? Can you get one?

Carol is taken aback by the request. Her pose goes cold. She puts her knees together and squirms uncomfortably.

CAROL
A...big...dog?

SAM
Like a great dane, or a mastiff or ...how big can a shepherd get?

CAROL
(closes her coat)
Uh...Sam...as sexually provocative as I'd like to think I am...

SAM
(interrupting)
I'm not asking you to fuck the dog, Carol - it's for me.

Carol stares at Sam.

CUT TO:

INT. FOYER TO SAM'S HOUSE - SAM AND DOBERMAN

Sam lets the big dog in, who obediently heels next to Sam.

SAM
Muffy!
(makes kissing sounds)
Muffy!

Muffy trots in from and stops at a doorway.

SAM
Muffy. Meet Adolph.
(to Adolph, pointing to Muffy)
Adolph. Eat Muffy.

Adolph stares at Muffy, his tail does not wag. Then Muffy makes a break in the opposite direction. Adolph takes off after her. Sam smiles.

CUT TO:

EXT. - ANONYMOUS PHONE BOOTH - KEN

He dials.

INT. - PHONE BOOTH AT LA BREA'AND WILSHIRE - NOON

TITLES READ:

THE NEXT MONDAY - SAM'S LAST CHANCE

It rings and rings and rings rings.

CUT TO:

INT.- BASEMENT - BARBARA - LATER THAT WEEK

Barbara is once again exercising along to an aerobics show. Her familiar "uh uh uh" sounds more like an exercise chant than a complaint. WE HEAR the door open and Ken comes down stairs with her breakfast wearing a deformed insect-like mask with a green wrinkled, puckered mouth lined with spikey teeth. Ken sets the tray down.

BARBARA
(glancing up)
You look like an asshole with teeth.

KEN
I brought you a sweet roll for dessert.

BARBARA
(firmly)
Shove the sweet roll.

KEN
Fuck you.

Barbara stops exercising. She's angry. Ken heads back upstairs.

BARBARA
(firmly)
You will not be abusive to me, my moronic friend. Why? Let me describe your future. Afterwards, if you are not killed, you will be tried. As I explained to your accomplice, "Miss Ditz", favorable testimony on my part could mean the difference between life and death. Ergo, butt-face, be kind to me, or die.

Ken sits down on the steps. He takes a serious tone.

KEN
Barbara...let me be honest with you. We're having a little problem with the ransom.
(beat)
You and Mr. Stone...did you...get along?

LIVING ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Sandy draws in a notebook packed with dog-eared drawings. She appears calm, but her hands tremble. Ken comes in. Ken looks over her shoulder to see what she's drawing.

SANDY'S NOTEBOOK

It's an extremely bizarre, intriguing full length evening gown.

KEN AND SANDY

Sandy looks up, sees that Ken is looking over her shoulder, slams the book shut and moves to the far side of the room.

SANDY
You know how I feel about that.

KEN
I know, I'm sorry.

SANDY
Then why did you do that?

KEN
Why? Because I've lived with you 12 years and you've only shown me your designs twice - when you were drunk!

SANDY
I don't want to go into this now.
(sits down, beat)
So what'd she say?

KEN
She just insulted me.

SANDY
(very sadly)
He doesn't love her.

KEN
Let's face it; she's not Dinah Shore. Gandhi would have strangled her.

SANDY
(verge of tears)
What do we do now, Kenny? I'm getting tired of being scared - all day, everyday, for weeks. I can't take it anymore.

KEN
We've got to get tough with the son of a bitch.

SANDY
Which means what?

KEN
Uh...I don't know. I don't know - maybe if we dropped our price.

CUT TO:

INT. SAM'S HOME OFFICE - SAM AND RED HEAD - EARLY EVENING

Sam spouts words of business wisdom. The eager, admiring redheaded cop eats it up. Sam's ego thrives on it.

SAM
COMMANDMENT # 5. Stick to your price. Only a bad salesman drops his pants, bends over and gets fucked without a fight - that's pathetic. And if you must come down in price, NEVER make them an offer. Once you make an offer, you've not negotiating; you're talking turkey. Only turkeys talk turkey. Good salesmen eat them. Now what if you're the buyer and they're the seller - wanna know how to drop their price without asking?

The redhead nods quickly. Sam loves this stuff. The phone rings, Sam answers.

SAM
Hold on please...
(puts line on hold, continues)
Show little or no interest in their wares, but ask for the price as if you were moderately interested. Then tell 'em it's too much, you're not interested anyways...
(sneaky smile)
...they'll automatically drop their price.

SAM
(to phone)
Hello?

KEN(THROUGH PHONE)
(angrily)
Mr. Stone, do you love your wife?

SAM
(rudely, interrupting Ken)
Hang on.
(puts Ken on hold, then politely to redhead)
Excuse me for just a few minutes.

The redhead leaves the office. Sam re-connects Ken.

SAM
Go ahead.

KEN
(with subdued anger)
Mr. Stone, you love your wife, don't you?

SAM
(making a "jerking off" gesture)
Oh, sure I love my wife!

KEN(THROUGH PHONE)
And you wouldn't want her to die, would you?

SAM
(melodramatically)
Oh no! Heaven forbid! In fact, I often lay awake at night thinking about all the heinous forms of death and torture you monsters may be considering for my wife.

KEN(THROUGH PHONE)
We'd use a gun, remember?

SAM
A gun would do it. So would a rope over a chin up bar, or a plastic bag secured tightly over the head, or a clean smack with a baseball bat to the knoggin', or you could simply put her on the ground and drive the car over her. They'd all do just fine.

KEN(THROUGH PHONE)
I suppose...

SAM
I would of thought you'd have killed her by now.

KEN
No, not yet. But if you ever want to (CONT.)

KEN (CONT.)
see her alive and well again you'll give us a satisfatory explanation as to why you haven't shown with the money.

Sam scratches his neck and puts his feet on his desk.

KEN
Hello?

SAM
I'm here.

Sam inspects his fingernails.

KEN
We're going to kill your wife.

SAM
I don't think you've got the nerve. I think you're a bunch of amateurs. You won't kill her. You don't have the guts.
(Sam waits for a response)
See? If you did, you'd just hang up the phone, get your gun and...
(making a gun with his fingers)
BLAM!- Blow her brains out.

KEN
I may be a ruthless man, Mr. Stone, but I'm not a stupid man. I did not kidnap your wife to kill her....I kidnapped her for the money.

SAM
You're asking for a lot of cash, pal. I don't keep that kind of money around the house. It's all tied up in a variety of investments. So..uh...sorry.

KEN
Sorry? What do you mean "sorry"?

SAM
No can do.

KEN
(his voice cracking)
What?!

SAM
No deal. I'm afraid you'll have to take your business elsewhere.

KEN
(beat)
What?

SAM
No cash - ola.

KEN
(beat)
What about...less?

SAM
(to himself)
You make me sick.

KEN
What?

SAM
(going in for the kill)
Make me an offer.

KEN
(beat)
What can you afford?

SAM
Just make me an offer.

KEN
(beat)
Bring $50,000 in unmarked bills to the same phone booth, noon, this Thursday.

Sam smiles, his opponent came down in price.

SAM
And if I don't?

KEN
Then the next time you see your wife, will be in the morgue.

CLICK - the phone disconnects. Sam crosses his fingers.

CUT TO:

TITLES READ:

THURSDAY - NOON - SAM'S THIRD LAST CHANCE

We HEAR A PHONE RING and ring and ring and ring.....

FADE IN:

INT. SAM'S KITCHEN - WALTERS, SAM, AND REDHEADED COP - MORNING

Sam comes in wearing a robe and slippers. The redheaded cop is waiting, his head hanging low. He stands when he sees Sam. Walters is equally somber. He motions for Sam to sit.

WALTERS
Please, sit down.

Sam sits down. Walters takes a deep breath.

WALTERS
Mr. Stone, I have bad news. We think we've found your wife.

CUT TO:

EXT. - LOS ANGELES CITY MORGUE - THAT MORNING

Walters and Sam get out of a police car.

INT. MORGUE - CADAVER HOTEL - SAM, WALTERS, AND CORONER

A small Asian man leads them to a drawer at the end of a wide hall-like room lined with cadaver drawers. The coroner pulls the drawer out, revealing a body covered by a white sheet. He takes hold of the sheet. The coroner and the cop look at Sam, waiting for his approval. Finally, Sam nods his head. The sheet is pulled back. Sam studies the body. CAMERA TILTS DOWN TO THE BODY - Before them lies a large, middle-aged heavy-set black man.

SAM
(matter-of-factly)
That's not her.

WALTERS
(to coroner)
There must be some mistake. We want the woman who was brought in this morning.

CORONER
Oh - Jane Doe 56. She's in the next room.

The coroner covers the body and leads them to the next room.

INT. - MORGUE - NEXT ROOM

The three men stand at a table. Sam nods his head, and the

sheet is pulled back. Sam stares at the body.

SAM
It looks like her. A lot like her.
(shaking his head)
But it's not her.

Sam pounds the table in anger - making the other's jump. He realizes he shouldn't have done that. He throws his hands up in the air with jubilant glee...

SAM
My Barbara! She's...ALIVE!

CUT TO:

INT. - POLICE LAB - TECHNICIAN

Comparing prints - one on the left says STONE KIDNAPPING and the next on the pile on the right reads KESSLER 58375939. He compares the Kessler print with the STONE KIDNAPPING. They match. He smiles.

TECHNICIAN
Jackpot.

CUT TO:

EXT. - SAM'S BACKYARD - REDHEADED COP

A uniformed cop is outside searching for chloroform.

THE HILL WHERE SAM THREW THE CHLOROFORM

A disheveled Muffy sits way down the hill, next to the bottle of chloroform. SHE BARKS.

REDHEADED COP

He turns and sees Muffy.

REDHEADED COP
There you are!
(he goes down the hill, picks up Muffy, and scratches her affectionately)
Where have you been? That big dog won't hurt you. He's just a big...

Then, the cop notices the bottle. He picks it up gingerly and examines it. He unscrews the cap and takes a little sniff, then a stronger sniff, and then...his eyes roll up, his knees go weak, and he passes out. Muffy sits next to him waiting.

CUT TO:

INT. - POLICE CAR - BENDER AND WALTERS - THAT AFTERNOON

While Walters drives, Bender refills his flask with Maalox, using a funnel he keeps in the glove compartment.

WALTERS
Why hasn't Stone heard from the kidnappers again? Why sit on their hands and do nothing? That won't bring them any money.

BENDER
Maybe they killed her.

WALTERS
Maybe Stone killed her.

BENDER
It's a possibility.
(mischeviously)
Do you think we should have him tailed?

WALTERS
I've got someone on him right now.

BENDER
(smiling)
I know.

CUT TO:

EXT. - TRENDY UPSCALE RESTAURANT - NOON

Sam's leaves his Rolls with a valet and goes in. CAMERA PANS TO FOUR DOOR PLYMOUTH. Two men in suits are following Sam.

INT. - TRENDY UPSCALE RESTAURANT - CAROL

Carol waits in a booth. She sees Sam approaching and waves to him. As Sam threads through the maze of tables, a man walking past stops at her table.

OLD BOYFRIEND
Sylviana, is that You?

CAROL
(pretending not to know him)
No, it isn't.

OLD BOYFRIEND
Pete. Don't you remember me?

CAROL
I'm sorry, you must have me mistaken for someone else.

OLD BOYFRIEND
Last summer, how could you forget? The feather jodhpurs? The rubber stirrups?

CAROL
Please, go away, you've got the wrong person.

OLD BOYFRIEND
You really don't remember? The grapefruit? The fingerpaints? The wax lips?
(walking away, mumbling to himself)
I guess I'm not so strange after all...

As soon as he goes away, Sam sits down. He looks upset.

SAM
Who was that?

CAROL
No one - he thought he knew me. What's wrong? You look upset.

SAM
(slams fist on table)
The witch lives!

CAROL
How do you know? Just because that corpse wasn't hers? She could well be dead.

Sam thinks about it and smiles.

CUT TO:

BASEMENT - BARBARA - DAY

Barbara, very much alive, is covered with a healthy layer of sweat and a rosey glow in her cheeks. She exercises to an afternoon aerobics show featuring an enthusiastic, obnoxious, overtly homosexual man leading a group of women in exercise. She has torn a strip from her dress and now uses it as a sweat-band. They "uh uh uh's" now sound like a drill instructor's hup hup hup. The music stops.

AEROBICS INSTRUCTOR
(out of breath)
Well, that was great, let's take a break.

BARBARA
(defiantly)
"Take a rest"? C'mon, ya fuckin' little wimp! Let's go!

She drops to the floor and continues - doing marine style push-ups.

CUT TO:

EXT. - SAM'S BACKYARD - REDHEADED COP - AFTERNOON

Muffy licks the cops face. He comes to. Keeping the bottle at arm's length, he replaces the cap, and heads up the hill.

CUT TO:

INT. - POLICE CAR - BENDER AND WALTERS - THAT AFTERNOON

Walters pulls the car over and parks. Bender puts the funnel away and picks up a manila folder.

BENDER
Let's go.

They get out of the car. CAMERA PULLS BACK TO REVEAL THAT WALTERS AND BENDER ARE IN FRONT OF KEN AND SANDY'S HOUSE.

INT. - LIVING ROOM

THE DOOR BELL RINGS. Ken comes in and goes to the door.

KEN
Who is it?

WALTER'S VOICE
Police officers.

Ken is momentarily terrified, but he opens the door managing to appear composed. On the door is an eviction notice. Ken tears it off. Bender shows him his gold badge.

BENDER
Ken Kessler?

Ken nods.

BENDER
I'm Lt. Bender, this is Lt. Walters. May we have a word with you?

KEN
(hesitantly, then cooperatively)
Uh...sure...come on in.

They come in. Ken motions towards the couch.

KEN

Have a seat.

They sit down. Ken pulls up a chair opposite them.

BENDER

Thank you.
(intensely)
About two weeks ago a woman named Barbara Stone was kidnapped frc her Bel-Air home. You're familiar -.th the case, aren't you?

Ken hesitates for just a moment when suddenly WE HEAR BARBARA'S PANIC BUTTON. Walters and Bender are stunned. They look to Ken for comment. Ken appears to remain calm.

KEN

Excuse me, please.

Ken gets up and disappears into the hallway.

BASEMENT

Ken comes down a few steps.

KEN

Yes?

A scowling Barbara points under the bed.

BARBARA

COCKROACH.

KEN

Alright. Give me a few minutes, I'll be right back.

He leaves Barbara. Barbara is aghast that immediate action was not taken.

LIVING ROOM

Ken comes back in and sits down. He offers no explanation.

WALTERS

What was that?

KEN
(matter-of-factly)
It's a T.V theme soundtrack.

BENDER
Let me continue. The vehicle we believe the kidnappers used left a tire print in the driveway. We took a mold of the print and had our lab analyze it.
(pulling an illustration from the manila folder, enthusiastically)
The results were rather interesting...

WHEN SUDDENLY, WE HEAR THE THEME TO ALFRED HITCHCOCK PRESENTS. Bender's getting a little cocky. He really enjoys this kind of police work.

KEN
(getting up)
Excuse me again.

Ken gets up.

BASEMENT - KEN

KEN
Please, just a few minutes.

BARBARA
Now!

She pushes the button once again.

KEN
Barbara, you're abusing your panic button privileges. I'm putting you on probation.

Ken yanks a power cord loose, then closes the door behind him.

LIVING ROOM - KEN AND BENDER

Ken comes back and sits down.

KEN
I'm sorry, you were saying?

Bender holds up a two dimensional, cardboard mock-up of a swing axle - complete with moving swing axle and, just as he's about to speak, THE PHONE RINGS

KEN
Excuse me.

Ken goes into the kitchen. Bender is becoming perturbed.

Ken comes back looking surprised.

KEN
It's for Lt. Walters.

Walters gets up and goes into the kitchen. Ken comes back and sits down. Bender holds his visual aid up again.

BENDER
This is a swing axle...

KITCHEN - WALTERS

WALTERS
(excitedly)
Chloroform? What about fingerprints?
(smiles)
Bingo. We have a winner.

LIVING ROOM - KEN AND BENDER

KEN
Is it warm in here or is it me?

BENDER
I'm fine.
(Bender pulls out two 8X10 photographs. He points to one)
These are prints of the kidnapper's car...
(pointing to the other photo)
...and THESE are prints from YOUR car.

KEN
(feigning interest)
That's fascinating.

WHEN SUDDENLY, WE HEAR THE THEME TO <u>ALFRED HITCHCOCK PRESENTS</u>. Bender's getting angry.

BENDER
What the hell <u>is</u> that?

KEN
It's the theme from "Alfred Hitchcock Presents".

BENDER
(perturbed, impatiently)
But why does it blare periodically?

KEN
I hooked a speaker up to an alarm clock. It's not working right just yet.

(CONT.)

KEN
I'm a very heavy sleeper.

Bender stares at him again. Walters comes in, anxious to talk to Bender. He whispers something in Bender's ear.

BENDER
No kidding?
(beat)
No kidding?

Walters smiles and nods his head. Walters whispers more.

BENDER
I'll be damned.
(gathers up graphs and photos, to Ken)
Excuse me.
(gets up,shakes Ken's hand)
Thank you for your time, Mr. Kessler.

Bender and Walters leave. Ken shuts the door, completely drained. He's stunned, thoroughly stunned. Then he weak-knees his way to the basement.

BASEMENT

He opens the door and checks the wire. It's been pulled.

BARBARA
You pulled the TV wire, you idiot.

She pushes her button and WE HEAR...THE THEME TO ALFRED HITCHCOCK PRESENTS

CUT TO:

INT. - SAM'S OFFICE - THAT AFTERNOON

MURRAY - a wirey, 60-ish, extremely irate customer, points an accusatory finger at Sam.

MURRAY
... you goddamn goniff...

SAM
No refunds.

MURRAY
(yelling, VERY upset,)
pounds on the table)
I want my money back on the whole lot!!

SAM
(smugly)
Forget it, Murray. Your only recourse is to sue me, and that'll cost you more than the whole damn thing is worth.

MURRAY
You son of a bitch! I'll have you arrested!

SAM
You can't have me arrested for at, you putz! Go ahead and try.

MURRAY
(going out the door)
You'll see! My wife's cousin is the D.A.!

Murray slams the door. Sam grins and returns to paperwork on his desk. Then the door opens and two cops enter, followed by Sam's bewildered secretary. One cop approaches Sam with handcuffs.

SAM
What the hell is going on here?

2ND COP
Sam Stone?

SAM
Yes?

2ND COP
Mr. Stone, you're under arrest. You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say, can, and will be used against you...

SAM
(incredulously)
For mixing silk with cotton?

CUT TO:

INT. - KEN AND SANDY'S KITCHEN - KEN AND SANDY - THAT AFTERNOON

Sandy mechanically prepares a meal for Barbara. She seems lost in a daze. Ken paces frantically. The TV is on. He's trying to act rationally.

KEN
...I don't KNOW what to do! I don't (CONT.)

KEN (CONT.)
know what's going on. All I know is they were about to nail me...and then they just...up and left!

A commercial comes on, and Ken turns down the volume. Ken and Sandy ignore the TV. Then a newsflash comes on showing Sam being led to jail. Then Barbara's picture comes on with the word kidnapped slashed out by a larger and bolder graphic - "MURDER".

KEN
We could let her go but then what? If they're going to arrest us, that won't stop them. We could to split to Mexico but, we have no money. He's got us over a barrel. What do you think? Should we try one more time? See if he'll pay us tonight?

Sandy drops a glass, which shatters on the floor. She stares at the glass. Ken gets up and embraces her.

SANDY
I just can't do this anymore...being scared all the time...this woman hates me. Hates me! I can't think. I can't make a decision. I'll do whatever you want to do.

KEN
I think I should go call him right now. What can we lose? It can't get any worse.
(beat)
Are you going to be okay?

Sandy nods her head, but she doesn't seem convincing.

KEN
Are you sure?

She nods again. CUT TO:

BASEMENT - BARBARA

Barbara is once again exercising to an aerobics show. Sandy, wearing a platinum blond gorilla mask, comes down with Barbara's dinner. Sandy looks very depressed; her sanity is running out. Barbara continues to exercise, ignoring Sandy. Sandy watches her.

SANDY
Well....here's your dinner. It's (CONT.)

SANDY (CONT.)
fruit salad. You seem to like that the most, although you still don't eat as much as you should.

BARBARA
My body has become a more efficient machine. I go farther with less food.

SANDY
You must be in pretty good shape by now...you certainly look good...

Barbara continues to ignore her. Sandy gives up. She turns and walks up the stairs.

SANDY
...and you've lost a lot of weight.

JACKPOT!!! BINGO!!! Unwittingly, Sandy has found the key to Barbara's heart. CAMERA PANS TO BARBARA AND RAPIDLY DOLLIES IN TO CLOSE UP. Barbara stops exercising and suddenly looks soft, innocent, child-like.

BARBARA
Hmmm? What?

SANDY
(continuing up stairs)
You've lost a lot of weight. At LEAST twenty pounds.

BARBARA
(nearly speechless)
What?!! Twenty...
(louder, almost desperately)
...do you have a scale?

Sandy stops, befuddled by Barbara's sudden excitement.

CLOSE SHOT - BATHROOM SCALE ON BASEMENT FLOOR - MINTUES LATER

Barbara steps on it. CAMERA PULLS BACK TO REVEAL BARBARA AND SANDY. Tears begin to roll down Barbara's cheeks. A huge grin breaks across her face.

BARBARA
(crying, very sincerely)
I don't know how to thank you.

SANDY
(bewildered)
Thank me?

BARBARA
(confidentially, very, very chummy)
I have been to ten different...fat farms for the past - oh god knows how many years and I lost a total, a TOTAL of six pounds.
(pointing to the scale)
I have lost....THIRTY TWO POUNDS!!!
(running her hands down her thighs)
I wasn't sure...but it feels...THIN.
(covering her mouth)
Oh my god! I can wear JEANS now!
(eyes light up)
I could wear...

SANDY
(interrupting, now excited)
I'll bet your...my size.
How would you like to try on some...
...spandex pants?

BARBARA
(sheepishly)
Oh no...I couldn't. Not spandex.
Why I'm in my fif-forties.
(getting momentarily excited)
You wouldn't have a...oh, never mind.

SANDY
What?

BARBARA
No, it's silly.

SANDY
What! Please, tell me!

BARBARA
All my life I've always wanted a slinky little figure so I could wear a full-length evening gown. Like Valentino or Bill Blass or Dior or...

Sandy is stunned.

SANDY
Are you kidding me? You're kidding me aren't you?

BARBARA
See, I told you, it's crazy to think someone...of your...well...moderate means might have a...

Sandy's excitement level is building, she can't contain herself. She bolts towards the stairs.

SANDY
I'll be right back.

CUT TO:

INT. - COURT - SAM AND HIS ATTORNEY

Sam and his lawyer take a stand at the bench.

JUDGE
Although this is a capital crime, the accused is an upstanding member of the community, a responsible and successful businessman, and has never before posed a threat to our society. Bail will be granted and set at $700,000.

He slams his gavel down. Sam's attorney leans over and whispers to Sam.

LAWYER
Want to try for a reduction?

SAM
No. Pay the ticket and let's get the hell out of here.

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE SHOT - SANDY'S SHOES ON BARBARA'S FEET

High heels. Jimi Hendrix's "Foxey Lady" plays as CAMERA PULLS BACK AND TILTS UP SLOWLY OVER BARBARA'S NEWLY SLIMMED-DOWN FORM AND SANDY'S WONDERFULLY ELEGANT AND EXOTIC FULL-LENGTH EVENING GOWN. Sandy holds a mirror for Barbara, who smiles a smile that could light up a continent. Sandy is caught up in Barbara's enthusiasm.

BARBARA
This is absolutely beautiful - who's design is this? Halston? Laura Biagiotti?

Sandy beams and shakes her head.

SANDY
Too conventional.

BARBARA
(beat, confidently)
I know who did it; Zandra Rhodes.

Sandy giggles with excitement and shakes her head again. With a proud, satisfied smile, she points to herself.

SANDY
I designed it.

BARBARA
Oh go on.

Sandy gigggles some more and beams like a child. Barbara looks the gown over.

BARBARA
You're a professional.

SANDY
(shakes head)
Nahhh...

BARBARA
(very seriously, with an "I have spoken" attitude)
This is sensational. Do you have more?

CUT TO:

EXT.- SAM'S HOUSE - SAM - EARLY EVENING

Sam parks and goes into his house. He's a broken man.

INT. - SAM'S FOYER

Sam comes in and the place is conspicuously quiet. The police have left.

SAM
Hello? Is anyone here? Hello?

Adolph and Muffy come into the foyer from the hall and sit side by side, watching Sam. They look suspicious. They look like a team. Then they make a fast break and go back in the direction they came from. Sam follows. He heads toward the bar.

BAR

Sam steps behind the bar but "something" on the floor makes him stop short. Insult to injury. He steps back and leans against the bar, resting his head in his hands. Disgusted. Defeated. He looks at the dogs.

SAM
Et tu, Adolph? Et tu?

The phone rings. Sam answers.

SAM

Hello?

EXT. - AN OPEN PHONE BOOTH - KEN - THAT NIGHT

Ken talks, as a newspaper truck parks and the driver exchanges the morning final with the evening final. Ken does not notice. THE HEADLINES READ: STONE CHARGED WITH MURDER - KIDNAPPING A HOAX.

KEN(THROUGH PHONE)

Mr. Stone, we were about to kill your wife when she pleaded with us to give you one more chance...

SAM

No! Don't kill her!

KEN

You must cooperate and cooperate now. If money's a problem we've made a compromise even you will find most appealing.

SAM'S HOME OFFICE

SAM

What's that?

EXT. - OPEN PHONE BOOTH - KEN

Ken turns around to find a man wearing an overcoat behind him waiting for the phone.

KEN

$10,000.

SAM(THROUGH PHONE)

10 grand? Sounds good to me. Is there anything else I can do? Anything.

The exhibitionist opens his coat to Ken. Ken holds the phone away, but not far enough, Sam can hear him.

KEN

You would look great in a pair of red plaid pants.

SAM(THROUGH PHONE)

(politely confused)

Red plaid?

The exhibitionist remains there.

SAM'S OFFICE - SAM

KEN
No? You prefer going bottomless, don't you?

SAM
(beat)
Alright, I'll get the pants. I don't know where, but I'll get them.

KEN(THROUGH PHONE)
You want me to call the police? Tell them what you've been doing? They'll come and take you away.

SAM
I'm willing to pay, honestly, I want you to understand that there won't be any more problems with...

KEN(THROUGH PHONE)
Soon as I hang up, I can call the police and tell them what's been going on.

SAM
(frantically)
How about 30,000?

KEN AND EXHIBITIONIST

The exhibitionist has refused to budge.

KEN
(firmly)
I said...STOP THAT!

SAM (THROUGH PHONE)
(quickly)
I'm sorry, 10,000...10,000.

The exhibitionist closes his coat and walks away.

KEN
(to Sam)
Okay, Mr. Stone, put the money in a suitcase and meet me in one hour...

CUT TO:

BASEMENT - MEANWHILE - CAMERA PANS ACROSS THE ROOM

We see dozens of elegant, wildly "new wavish" full-length evening gowns hanging all over the room. CAMERA PANS TO BARBARA'S TABLE - now filled with make-up - eye liner, blush, etc., a curling iron, hair spray, costume jewelry, etc. CAMERA PULLS BACK TO REVEAL that both girls are wearing full length evening gowns, at the card table drinking tea. Sandy is perfectly elegant in a strapless lavender, silke and chiffon gown charmingly complemented by a Horrible Melting Man mask. Barbara looks ravishing in a silver satin gown covered with sequins, accented perfectly with a string of fake pearls and a steel chain around her ankle. Near Barbara's ankle is a nearly empty bottle of Stolichnaya. That's not tea in those cups. They're both a little looped.

SANDY
Should we put the showroom in Paris or New York?

BARBARA
Both.

CAMERA PULLS BACK TO TWO SHOT OF SANDY AND BARBARA

They're both wearing full length evening gowns and they look absolutely stunning. They both have their hair up, and their make-up looks professionally applied - they've been playing for hours.

BARBARA
(quickly)
When the hell do I get out of here?

SANDY
(uncomfortably)
Well...as soon as Mr. Stone pays the ransom.

BARBARA
(still consumed by her weight loss)
What's the problem? What is the ransom?

SANDY
It was $500,000...

BARBARA
(trying to look at her butt)
That shouldn't be a problem...

SANDY
He complained.

BARBARA
He complained?

SANDY
(hemming and hawing)
Uh huh..and...then we..uh...dropped our price to...uh...50,000...

BARBARA
(soberly)
Yeah?

SANDY
(looking at the floor sadly)
He didn't pay.

BARBARA
(in disbelief)
He didn't pay?

Sandy shakes her head.

BARBARA
So what happens now?

SANDY
Well...we're...dropping our price again.

BARBARA
(slow burn)
Yes?

SANDY
To $10,000.

BARBARA
Do I understand this correctly? I'm being marked down? What is this? The bargain basement? HAVE I BEEN KIDNAPPED BY K-MART?

She picks up a book and throws it wildly. It hits the TV stand, which in turns topples the TV, crashing to the ground.

INT. - KEN AND SANDY'S LIVING ROOM - AN HOUR LATER

Ken comes home after his phone call with Sam. He looks bad.

SANDY (OFFSCREEN)
Ken? Is that you?

He flops on the couch in a depressed heap.

KEN

Yeah.

(grumbling to himself)

Ten fuckin' thousand dollars. That son-of-a-bitch.

Sandy floats into the room, doing a make-shift ballet, wearing a wide grin and still another gown.

SANDY

(lilting voice)

I've got the answer to our problems.

Ken is stunned. Is it too late? Has Sandy flipped?

KEN

Are you okay?

SANDY

(pirouetting up to Ken)

Not just okay. Not just terrific.

(wildly enthusiastic)

I am the new rising star in high fashion! As soon as we let Barbara go, we all go into business together. Paris, London, New York. She does the money, I do the designs, and you get rich. When do we cut her loose?

KEN

Did she tell you this?

SANDY

Of course she told me...do you think I'd make it up?

Ken doesn't answer. He has a very serious look on his face.

SANDY

(terribly amused)

You think I'm crazy, don't you? Go talk to her. You'll see. When do we let her out? I want to get started.

KEN

Just as soon as we get the money...

EXT. - SUNSET AND DOHENY - SAM - LATER THAT NIGHT

TITLES READ: SAM'S FOURTH LAST CHANCE

Sam wears red plaid pants. THE PHONE RINGS. Sam answers.

SAM

Hello?

KEN(THROUGH PHONE)

Greetings Mr. Stone. I would like to point out that if the police are with you, or if the money is incorrect your wife will be killed.

SAM

Don't kill her! Everything's fine!!

KEN

Good. You are to walk east on Sunset for six hundred squares of sidewalk.

SAM

Six hundred squares?

KEN

Yes. Then turn right into an office building. On the far southern wall is a pay phone. Wait there for further instructions. Do you understand?

SAM

Yes.

KEN

You better hurry. You see your wife is tied to a time bomb, and if there's any gross delay...

SAM

(alarmed)

Let's get going!

The phone disconnects. Sam hangs up, goes to the sidewalk, and starts walking and counting squares.

SAM

1...2...3...4...5...6...7...8...9...

EXT. - ROOF OF A BUILDING OVERLOOKING SUNSET BLVD. - KEN

Ken watches Sam through binoculars.

KEN'S POV - SAM THROUGH BINOCULARS

Sam, counting and walking. PAN OVER STREET AS Ken searches for police, past people, cars - and a plumbing repair van (DISGUISED POLICE SURVEILLANCE UNIT with Walter's at the wheel). PAN BACK TO SAM who continues to walk and count.

SAM
...145...146...147...148...149...

He walks towards a group of nuns going over a map. One nun looks up, sees Sam coming, and stops him for directions.

NUN
(very politely)
Excuse me, we're from Boston and...

SAM
(staring down at sidewalk)
GET THE FUCK AWAY FROM ME, GODAMMIT!!
CAN'T YOU SEE I'M BUSY?

The nun instinctively clutches her crucifix in fear. Sam's lost count. He turns around in a huff and goes back. Sam has returned to the phone booth. He starts to recount.

SAM
1...2...3...4...5...6...7...8..

ON THE ROOF - KEN

Still watching.

INT. - THE POLICE SURVEILLANCE VAN - TECHNICIAN AND BENDER

The van is filled with electronic gismos. A TECH wearing headphones receives radio messages from outside the van.

TECH
He's running east again.

BENDER
Running?

TECH
That's what he says.

INT. - OFFICE BUILDING - SAM

Sam rushes in from the street, through the lobby to a pay phone. It rings a moment later. He answers.

SAM
Yeah!

KEN(THROUGH PHONE)
Mr. Stone. I want you to get into the elevator, go to the third floor and wait by the phones for further instructions. Do you understand?

SAM
Yes. Are we on schedule?

KEN
Yes. Goodbye.

The phone goes dead. Sam hangs up and gets into the elevator.

INT. - SURVEILLANCE VAN - TECH AND BENDER

TECH
They saw him go into an elevator.

BENDER
Send someone in to follow him and watch all exits.

INT.- ELEVATOR - SAM

Sam gets out at the third floor, goes over to the phones and waits. On his right is the men's room. A short cowboy-type (cowboy hat, boots, belt buckle etc.) comes out of the men's room, sees Sam and tips his hat to Sam. Sam ignores him. The cowboy reaches into his pocket, presumably to take out a quarter, but instead pulls out a pistol and aims it at Sam's nose. Sam raises his hands. The cowboy takes Sam's wallet and pats Sam down, finding a fat envelope filled with cash in Sam's inside pocket.

SAM
Oh shit. No. Please!

THE PHONE RINGS. The cowboy stuffs the cash into his pocket and motions for Sam to move away from the phones.

SAM
I need that money! You don't understand!

The cowboy produces handcuffs and locks Sam to a doorhandle just out of reach from the phones.

SAM
Please! Let me answer the phone! You don't understand! My wife - she's been kidnapped and you've taken the ransom money! She'll die!

The cowboy lifts the receiver with his gun, then lowers it back on the cradle - ceasing the ringing. He exits.

SAM
Nooooo!!!!

THE PHONE RINGS AGAIN. Sam stretches, tries to reach it,

but can't. He tries again, barely touches the receiver, lifts it from the cradle, and...it slips from his grip to the floor - falling even farther from his reach.

SAM
Hang on! Please hang on ! I've been robbed! I can't reach the phone. I've been handcuffed to a door!

He sticks his leg out and works the phone over. He puts it to his ear. The line is dead.

CUT TO:

EXT. - OFFICE BUILDING

The cowboy leaves, walking past an unmarked police car. One of the cops speaks into a mike. He nods to the other cop, who gets out and follows the cowboy.

ANOTHER ANGLE - COP AND COWBOY

The cop follows the cowboy into a bar.

INT. - BAR - POLICEMAN

The bar is crowded. The policeman searches for the cowboy.

BAR BATHROOM - STALL - COWBOY FROM BEHIND

Facing the toilet, he removes his hat, and Sandy's long blond tresses cascade down her shoulders.

CUT TO:

EXT. - PARKING LOT NEAR BAR - KEN IN SANDY'S CAR

Ken is waiting for Sandy. The radio is on and so is the news. Ken is gaga.

RADIO
Latest word on Sam Stone's arrest is that he has already been released on $700,000 bail...

CUT TO:

THE BAR - POLICEMAN AND CROWD

The cop is looking for the cowboy. Sandy, wearing spandex pants and high heels, and looking nothing like a cowboy, walks past him.

EXT. - PARKING LOT NEAR BAR - KEN IN SANDY'S CAR

Ken is stunned. He shuts the radio off. Sandy rounds a

corner and breaks into a run. She jumps into the passenger side with wide (terrified?) eyes? Ken starts the car. He's very concerned for Sandy.

KEN
Are you okay sweetheart?

SANDY
(breaking into a grin)
That was so...EXCITING!

KEN
(amazed)
You liked it?

SANDY
Yeah!

KEN
Good. Cause we get to do it again. I'm upping the ante back to $500,000.

CUT TO:

INT. - KEN AND SANDY'S LIVING ROOM

Sandy's pacing, greatly concerned. Ken comes in. He's just called Sam and upped the ante, and he's feeling great.

KEN
I called him and was he pissed! It was GREAT!

SANDY
(pacing)
It just wasn't right. She wasn't just a hostage, she was my partner! We made an agreement and I promised to let her go! If I reneged on my promise, I would have been acting in bad faith.

KEN
(curiously)
Why are you speaking in the past tense?

SANDY
(beat)
I let Barbara go.

It takes a few moments before it sinks in and then...

KEN
(yelling)
You did WHAT?!!

Ken runs over to the basement.

BASEMENT

He runs down the stairs and sees that Barbara really is gone. She is.

KEN
Jesus CHRIST!

LIVING ROOM

Ken comes in and paces like a madman.

KEN
You are out of your fuckin' mind!!

SANDY
You don't understand, she really likes us now. Believe me Ken, she can be trusted. If it weren't for us - she'd be dead and overweight.

EXT.- A 7-11 CONVENIENCE STORE

Barbara rushes in, nearly out of breath. The clerk eyes her suspiciously.

BARBARA
HELP!!, I'VE BEEN...

She glances down at a newspaper rack.

BARBARA'S POV - THE NEWSPAPER

The headlines to the Los Angeles Times read:

BARBARA STONE MURDERED
KIDNAPPING A HOAX - HUSBAND SUSPECTED
Incriminating evidence found.

CLOSE - BARBARA

BARBARA
...murdered?

She picks up the paper, and as she reads it her eyes glare, her lips pull back to bare her teeth, and she growls a deep low growl like some rabid wild beast. She throws the paper down.

BARBARA
(bellowing)
THAT SON OF A BITCH!!!!

She storms out of the store and passes a newspaper vending machine for the Herald-Examiner. Barbara stops and reads the headlines.

CLOSE - NEWSPAPER

STONE ARRESTED FOR
WIFE'S MURDER
Husband has mistress.

Included are photos of Sam and Carol.

WIDER - BARBARA AND CLERK

The clerk runs out.

CLERK
Uh, Ma'am! You'll have to pay for that...

Barbara, pumped up on anger and in top shape, grabs the newsstand and smashes it on the ground, breaking it apart. She takes one of the papers with her.

CLERK
It's on the house!

Barbara storms off in the direction she came from, muttering.

CUT TO:

INT. - KEN AND SANDY'S BEDROOM

Ken is panicking and angry. He dumps a drawer-full of clothing onto the bed and ties up the four corners of the blanket. Sandy watches.

SANDY
You simply don't understand. She really, truly loves me. She loves my gowns. She's changed Ken.

KEN
Changed?! What'd you do?! Perform an exorcism?!

SANDY
(enthusiastically)
She lost thirty pounds!

Ken stares at Sandy with a you're-out-of-you're-mind look.

SANDY
(defensively)
You had to be there, it was a very special moment.

KEN
TEMPORARY INSANITY? Do something! The police will be here any second!

SANDY
Ken, please; have faith in me. I am perfectly confident that Barbara will not turn us in. The police are not coming.

WE HEAR A KNOCK AT THE FRONT DOOR. Sandy's confidence turns to instant horror.

SANDY
(whispering in terror)
Bertha!...

Ken looks toward the front door. He looks defeated.

KEN
I'm surprised they knocked.

Ken goes to confront his fate. Sandy tries to escape through the bedroom window, but it's jammed.

LIVING ROOM

Ken, head hanging low, opens the door. Before him stand two policemen. One of them holds a clipboard.

COP#1
(shows Ken a picture)
Hello. We were wondering if you've seen this man.

Ken looks at the photo. He holds up a picture of the psycho - the "Ma and Pa Ax Killer".

COP #1
He was sighted in this area a few weeks ago and, again this morning. He's psychotic, extremely dangerous and extremely violent.

Sandy runs full speed from the hall and into the kitchen.

KEN
(smiles)
My wife. She's...late to work.
(looking over photograph)
No, doesn't look familiar.

COP #1
Keep this and call us at this...
(points to number on sheet)
...number in case you do see him.
Under no circumstances should you
try to subdue him yourself. He's
extremely dangerous.

COP #2
Could you ask your wife if she
might have seen him? It's very
important.

KEN
Sure.

Ken takes the sheet and goes into the kitchen.

KITCHEN

The backdoor is open and Sandy's gone. Ken goes out back.

EXT. - BACKYARD

Sandy's crawling over the wall. Ken grabs her.

KEN
Come back here. They're looking for
someone else.

LIVING ROOM - COPS

KEN (OFFSCREEN)
(loudly)
Honey, have you seen this man?
(beat)
No? Okay.

Ken comes back in shaking his head.

KEN
I'm afraid not.

COP #1
Thank you.

KEN
You're welcome.

He rushes back to the bedroom.

BEDROOM - KEN AND SANDY

Sandy's hyperventilating.

KEN
Where's the valium?

She shakes her head. No more.

KEN
(throwing hands up)
Damn! We don't have time for this now!

He grabs her by the shoulders and sits her down.

KEN
(frantically)
It's the Academy Awards! Anne Bancroft announces the nominees for best costume design in a motion picture! Uh...who? Uh...Bob Mackie, and uh...Edith...uh... Edith - whatever the hell her name is, what is it? Head?

SANDY
(shaking her head frantically)
Dead! Dead!

KEN
Edith Dead?!

Sandy babbles incoherently - she can't talk, and he's having no effect. Ken runs out of the room and comes back with a bottle of Stolichnaya.

KEN
DRINK!

Sandy takes a stiff swig. Ken continues to pack.

CUT TO:

EXT. - SURBURBAN STREET IN KEN AND SANDY'S NEIGHBORHOOD - BARBARA

She's looking for Ken and Sandy's house, but...

BARBARA
(to herself)
All these damn houses look the same.

CAMERA PANS TO ACROSS THE STREET - IN THE SHADOWS - A MAN

The Ma and Pa Ax Killer watches Barbara with confused and terror-filled eyes. Hereafter known as PSYCHO.

PSYCHO
(mumbling to himself)
You're not going to get me this time...

ANGLE ON BARBARA

She's baffled. Then a van speeds out of a garage and past her - Ken and Sandy's van. Ken and Sandy don't see Barbara, and she doesn't recognize them. Barbara goes up to their house, stares at it for a moment, then goes into their house.

INT. - KEN AND SANDY'S - LIVING ROOM

She comes in and looks around. Then she goes into the...

THE BEDROOM

The place is a mess. She turns and goes into the...

HALLWAY - BARBARA

She walks but two feet when, on the opposite end of the hall, the Psycho steps into view. Barbara halts.

PSYCHO
You look scared.
(beat, coming towards her)
You should be.

Barbara retreats to the basement.

BASEMENT - BARBARA

She runs downstairs and crosses the small room. The psycho follows slowly, purposefully.

BARBARA
Stay away from me, you shitbag bastard.

Barbara steps backwards, and almost trips on something. She looks down to seen what it is...

INSERT

- It's the empty bottle of Stolichnaya.

PYSCHO

Coming towards her - the closer he comes, the more disgusting, filthy and malevolent he looks.

PSYCHO
You...look like my mother.
(bursting out, top of his lungs)
I HATE MY MOTHER!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

FADE TO BLACK:

EXT. - GAS STATION IN SAN DIEGO

They're getting gas. Ken puts the nozzle out of the van and back on the pump.

KEN
Sandy - give me a twenty.

SANDY
I don't have the money Ken, you do.

KEN
What do you mean you don't have the money?

WIDER

This goes on a few more time and ends with Ken slugging the side of his van a few times. Then he walks over to the attendant. He talks to him a little bit and then gives him his wedding band. The attendant bites on it, looks at it, smiles and nods. Ken returns to the van. Ken looks at Sandy.

CLOSER - KEN AND SANDY

SANDY
Don't look at me - I was in no condition to deal with the money.

KEN
You're right, I'm an idiot.
(beat)
Now what? The money's just sitting there.

SANDY
Do you think it's too late to go back? It's only an hour.

KEN
I'm sure the police are there.

SANDY
We could call. If they're there, just hang up.

EXT. - PHONE BOOTH - KEN AND SANDY

Ken dials. Sandy stands just outside the booth.

BARBARA
Hello?

KEN
(agog)
Barbara?

BARBARA
Ken.

SANDY
(in a tone normally reserved for lost puppies)
My Barbara! She's come home!

KEN
What're you doing there?

INT - KEN AND SANDY'S KITCHEN - BARBARA

In one hand Barbara holds a blender full of protein shake.

BARBARA
I'll tell you what I'm doing here...
(viciously)
..I'm here to take my prick bastard husband for every goddamn cent he's got!! I'm going to break that fucker! I WANT HIM ON HIS KNEES!
(businesslike)
How'd you like to make some BIG bucks?

KEN AND SANDY

He listens to Barbara's proposal. He's very skeptical. Then he covers the phone.

KEN
She wants to..."join forces"...

CUT TO:

INT. - KEN'S VAN

They're heading north, going home. Ken is very wary. Sandy's happy.

SANDY
What's the matter?

KEN
I don't trust her. She's such a...bitch.

SANDY
(fondly, smiling)
Ahhh...she acts tough, but once you get to know her, in her own way, she's actually...quite...sweet.

CUT TO:

INT. - DOOR AT TOP OF BASEMENT STAIRS

BOOM!! The door's kicked open. Barbara comes with a glass of protein drink in one hand, and the empty bottle of Stolichnaya in the other.

BARBARA
Hey! Human excrement! Chow time!

PSYCHO

He's lying on the floor of the basement wrapped like a mummy with laundry twine and electrical tape. He's also got a serious bruise on his forehead. He's asleep. Barbara coms over and WHOMP!! kicks him solidly in the stomach. He wakens. (with a muffled OOOMPH!!)

BARBARA
Wake up, Sleeping Beauty, here's your magic potion.

She yanks the tape off his mouth - he yelps in pain. She puts the drink (with a straw) in front of him.

PSYCHO
Is this all I'm going to get?

Barbara stands over the psycho slapping the Stolichnaya bottle in her palm. She looks like a prison guard gone bad.

BARBARA
Would you like me to kick you in the stomach a few more times?

PSYCHO
No thanks.

BARBARA
(turns and leaves)
Enjoy, shithead.

INT. - KITCHEN - KEN AND SANDY

They come in carrying their bundled-up-luggage/laundry.

SANDY
Hello?
(beat)
Hello?
(concerned)
Hello?

Barbara comes in and looks Ken over carefully and then the same to Sandy. She's never seen their faces before. It makes Ken very nervous.

BARBARA
Good-looking couple.

Ken doesn't trust her. But Sandy does. She and Barbara exchange warm smiles and then Sandy embraces her.

KITCHEN TABLE - KEN, SANDY AND BARBARA

Ken and Sandy are telling Barbara why they turned to crime. Ken drinks a Mexican beer.

KEN
...a year after we were married, I graduated from law school. While waiting for the bar results, we invested all our savings in a laundromat. Things were going quite well...
(dryly)
We were gonna be rich.
(beat)
...until the fire.

BASEMENT - PSYCHO

He knocks over the glass of protein drink with his head, breaking it.

KITCHEN - KEN, SANDY AND BARBARA

KEN
...the insurance carrier had gone belly up. It was a complete loss.
(sighs)
...and I failed the bar.

BASEMENT - PSYCHO

He squirms around, his fingers grasping desperately for a piece of the sharp broken glass.

KITCHEN

Ken is on his second beer.

KEN
(sarcastically)
...another "sure thing" investment fund.
(beat)
Equity Funding.

BARBARA

Oy.

KEN
Then we worked for three years and managed to save up $15,000 and bought into a Stolichnaya vodka franchise...
(dryly)
We were gonna get rich.

BASEMENT

The psycho's got his hands on a piece of glass and he's cutting his bonds.

KITCHEN

KEN
Then, the Russians invaded Afghanistan. People were dumping Stolichnaya in the streets. We sold it at a huge loss. People forget. We saved up and bought it back a year later. A week after that, the Russians shot down that Korean 747. So for the sake of world peace, we got out of Stolichnaya for good...

SANDY
Actually we traded it for the inventory of a bankrupt mask company. It was two weeks before Halloween. It seemed like a great idea, but the masks were warehoused in Illinois and....

BASEMENT

His hands are loose, now he tears at the bonds on his arms.

KITCHEN

Ken knocks off his fourth bottle and puts it with the other empties.

KEN
Then next plan was Sandy's.
(dryly)
We were gonna get rich.

SANDY
Spandex pants. Just before they were the rage we found a jobber who could make them dirt cheap in Taiwan. But he delivered 12 months too late - and they were BELL BOTTOMS! He promised to have them altered, make them narrowed-legged. And he did IN TAIWAN! It was another year before the bastard delivered. Spandex was out of fashion. We found out later he lied to us. He'd received, sold and reordered over twenty shipments. over during the whole time.

BARBARA
Sam?

Ken nods.

BARBARA
Why didn't you sue?

KEN
(sheepishly)
Contracts were never my strong point.
(sarcastically to Barbara)
His partner had written a rather sneaky, ironclad contract.

BARBARA
Partner? Sam has no partners.

KEN
(foolishly)
You're...not his partner?

BARBARA
(snickering)
He told you I was his partner?
(almost affectionately)
Sam...Sam...Sam...he can be a real son of bitch, can't he? I'm not his partner.

Ken gulps and has a long swig of beer.

KEN
(standing up)
I'm going to the bathroom.

SANDY
(whispered to Barbara)
Ken failed the bar one more time...
...and then he gave up.

BARBARA
Good. That was getting depressing.

SANDY
And then there was the DeLorean thing...

HALLWAY - KEN

Ken heads into the bathroom (opposite the false/wall basement door) when the basement door creaks open. Ken stops, shocked. The psycho stands there, looking back at Ken, wielding the empty bottle of Stolichnaya menacingly.

PSYCHO
(furiously, gesturing wildly)
You! You look just like my father!
(beat, stepping up on the last step, raising the bed leg to strike Ken)
(top of his lungs)
I HATE MY FATHER...!!!

His wild gesturing and a missed step causes him to lose his balance, and he falls backwards...

BASEMENT

...tumbling down the stairs and coming to rest at the bottom in a twisted, grotesque, (albeit darkly humorous) heap.

HALLWAY

Sandy and Barbara rush in, Ken is stunned.

SANDY
What was that?

KEN
(pointing to basement)
There's someone in the basement who thinks I look like his father.

SANDY
(confused)
You have a son?

BARBARA
(moves past them, down the stairs)
That must be Mr. Shit Head.

SANDY
Who is Mr. Shit Head?

KEN
(following Barbara downstairs)
I think he's on Sesame street.

SANDY
(to Barbara)
Barbara, who is Mr. Shit Head?

BASEMENT

Ken and Sandy follow Barbara to the bottom of the stairs. Barbara looks over the psycho for signs of life.

BARBARA
(checking his pulse)
He followed me in when I returned.
(checks jugular)
He told me I looked like his mother.
(beat)
He hates his mother.
(puts ear to his chest)
He's dead.
(beat)
So if I look like his mother, and you...
(looks at Ken)
...look like his father, then...
(looks at psycho)
...this is what our son would look like.

They all look at the psycho. What a disgusting thought.

BARBARA
Pretty strong argument for birth control.

CUT TO:

INT. - SAM'S HOUSE - THAT NIGHT

Sam is having a stiff drink while laying in bed watching the news - about him. He looks down. THE PHONE RINGS.

SAM
Hello?

KEN
Mr. Stone?

SAM
Ah Christ, what now?

KEN
She's in bad shape, Mr. Stone.

SAM
Why? Why is she in bad shape?

KEN
We've been torturing her.

SAM
Tort...don't kill her!

KEN
We found out your wife is worth quite a bit more than $500,000.

SAM
(going cold)
Hmm? What are you talking about?

KEN
We've changed our minds, we're upping the ransom.

SAM
AGAIN?! What's to stop you from changing your mind again, and again?

KEN
Five million dollars.

SAM
ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR UCKIN' MINDS?!!! Where'd you get an incredible figure like that?

KEN
You'd be amazed at the quantity and quality of information a lit cigarette can provide.

SAM
(slams end table with fist)
Ah JESUS!!!
(mumbling to himself)
The bitch talked.

KEN
First, there's the Picasso and the Miro in your office, then the Jackson Pollack in the den...

SAM
(to Ken,furiously)
You inhuman slime!

CUT TO:

INT. - POLICE STATION - WALTERS, BENDER, SAM - THE NEXT MORNING

Sam pleads with the investigators, desperately trying to convince them that he didn't kill Barbara. They ignore him. Walters unwraps a sandwich and takes a bite. Bender stares at the sandwich like a hungry dog.

SAM
(discouraged desperate and angry)
I tell you the woman's been kidnapped! You've got to believe me. You've got to come and catch them! They'll be there this time, I'm sure!

Sam waits for their response.

BENDER
(to Walters)
What do you think?

WALTERS
(nodding his head)
Good but...their mustard...varies...

They ignore Sam.

SAM
PLEASE BELIEVE ME!

Bender looks at Walters, he's confused.

BENDER
Varies?

WALTERS
Sometimes it's...vinegary...sometimes ..it's hot...or sweet...sometimes...

SAM
(incredulously)
JESUS CHRIST!! I'm pleading for my life here and you're discussing the inconsistencies of lunch meat condiments!!! Haven't you heard a word I said?!!

Bender looks at Sam and sighs.

BENDER
(to Walters)
What do you think? Should we go?

WALTERS
I'd hate to waste the taxpayers money on...

SAM
(interrupting)
I'LL PAY!!

CUT TO:

INT. - KEN AND SANDY'S - KEN, SANDY AND BARBARA

The three of them discuss ransom pick-up plans. They draw straws. Ken's face goes white.

KEN
Oh no, not Sandy's plan.

SANDY
What's wrong with my plan? I thought you'd like it.

KEN
I have a real hard time believing it would work. You think the police would let me just...drive up, take the money and run?

BARBARA
Just keep threatening to kill me.

KEN
But what if they shoot me on the spot? I don't even know if we'd get that far and besides - don't we have to steal a car to do this?

CUT TO:

EXT. - KEN'S VAN - SOMEWHERE IN THE VALLEY - EVENING

Cruising around looking for a car to steal.

INT. - KEN'S VAN - KEN AND SANDY

Sandy drives. She points to the right. To a blue car.

SANDY
How about that blue car?

Sandy parks the van next to it, blocking it from view from the street. She turns the engine off.

INT. - KEN'S VAN

Ken gets out, holding a wire hanger. He leans up against the car and BAA!! BAA!! The alarm goes off! Ken panics and jumps back into the van. Sandy starts the van, puts it in gear, pops the clutch, and stalls it. Ken is frantic.

KEN
The brake! Release the brake!

Sandy releases the brake, starts the car up, pops the clutch, and...stalls it again.

KEN
Ah shit. C'mon, Sandy!

She starts it again - this time the car turns over, but it doesn't catch. She pumps the accelerator - but no go.

KEN
You're flooding it - stop pumping!

She stops pumping and continues to turn the engine over.

KEN
Oh shit - it's flooded!

The alarm continues to blare. The engine almost catches, but the battery is dying YUN YUN YUUN YUUUN YUUUUUUUUUN.

KEN
OH GOD, I DON'T BELIEVE THIS!! I'M GOING TO HAVE TO PUSH START THE CAR!!

He grits his teeth at her and gets out.

EXT. - KEN'S VAN - KEN

He gets behind the car and starts pushing.

KEN
Now!

She pops the clutch, and...it doesn't catch. He pushes it again, and...it barely catches, sputters, coughs, and finally runs smooth. Ken jumps in, and they drive off.

CUT TO:

EXT. - HUGE PARKING LOT IN THE VALLEY - NIGHT

It's late at night, very quiet, and the lot is nearly empty. WE CAN HEAR KEN'S VAN APPROACHING. They drive onto the parking lot and stop next to a car way off in the distance.

CLOSER

With the motor running, Ken gets out. Using a coat hanger pulls up the lock button and opens the door. He crawls under the dash, hot wires the ignition, and starts the car. Ken waits for Sandy to drive away, then drives off slowly. He gets as far as the middle of the parking lot when...BA! BA! BA! TWO alarms go off! The headlights, parking lights, and red lights in the wheel wells flash on and off! Ken stops, gets out of the car, runs off into the distance, and disappears over a little wall.

CUT TO:

INT.- KEN AND SANDY'S GARAGE - KEN AND SANDY - THAT NIGHT

They've found a car - a jacked up, primer gray, Plymouth.

CUT TO:

INT. - KEN AND SANDY'S BEDROOM

They're laying in bed the night before the big day. Ken looks worried.

CLOSE ON KEN

KEN
I'm tired of all this, Sandy. I'm just...tired. Not just the kidnapping, the whole thing. the big schemes the high hopes, and the...the inevitable let downs. If this thing screws up tommorrow - if I get caught I might...really...kill myself.

He waits for Sandy's reaction, but Sandy is silent.

KEN
I'm not kidding.

Sandy is still silent.

KEN
If I'm...killed tommorrow, I want to be cremated and have the ashes sprinkled over the ocean. Alright?
(beat)
Alright?

Sandy snores. CAMERA TILTS DOWN TO SANDY. She's asleep.

DISSOLVE TO:

SAME SHOT - BUT MORNING

Ken's been up all night. He looks tired.

CUT TO:

INT. - CAROL'S LIVING ROOM - CAROL - THE NEXT DAY

Carol is on the phone with Earl.

CAROL

Are you ready?
(beat)
Good. Sam just called. He's stopping by before he goes to Sunset and Doheny.
- And he's got the money.
(beat)
Mug him in the elevator.

CUT TO:

INT. - HALLWAY OUTSIDE OF CAROL'S APT. - SAM AND CAROL

Sam kisses Carol goodbye. He's holding a suitcase.

CAROL

Good luck.

Right behind Sam, the elevator opens to reveal Earl, and an old woman. Sam gets into the elevator and waves goodbye to Carol. The elevator doors close.

ELEVATOR - SAM AND EARL

The elevator stops at the next floor and the old lady gets off. The door closes. Earl clicks open his switchblade and sticks the STOP ELEVATOR button. The elevator stops. Earl holds the knife up for Sam to see.

EARL

Gimme the bag, old man.

Sam pulls a pistol from his sport coat pocket.

My ass.

CUT TO:

EXT. - PHONE BOOTH BEHIND GARAGE ON SUNSET AND DOHENY - NOON

CAMERA PANS ACROSS THE TOPS OF ALL THE BUILDINGS. All is quiet. CAMERA TILTS DOWN TO SAM, waiting in the phone booth. THE PHONE RINGS. Sam answers.

SAM

Hello?

KEN(THROUGH PHONE)
(with accent)
Do you have the money?

SAM
Yes I do.

KEN(THROUGH PHONE)
Are the police with you?

SAM
(disappointedly)
No.

KEN(THROUGH PHONE)
Are you sure?

SAM
Positive.

KEN(THROUGH PHONE)
If there is any foul up, or any indication that we will be followed, - your wife will be killed. Do you understand?

SAM
Perfectly.

KEN(THROUGH PHONE)
That will be all Mr. Stone.

STONE
And now what?

KEN
Wait and see.

The phone disconnects. Sam hangs up and waits, arms folded.

KEN IN HIS STOLEN CAR

Ken comes around the corner disguised in an orange Bozo Wig, Groucho glasses (with dark lenses) and nose. He parks the car near Sam. Sam waits in the phone booth with his arms crossed. Ken gets out of the car holding a walkie-talkie.

KEN
The bag, please.

Sam hands it over, cursing. Ken takes it, and turns around to find a dozen disguised policemen with guns drawn. Squad cars and unmarked police cars line up, forming a barricade. Ken is scared shitless. Sam is delighted.

BENDER(THROUGH BULLHORN)
Put the bag down, and put your hands on your head!

SAM
They're from the government. They're here to help you.

KEN
I said no police! Do you know what this means?
(puts walkie-talkie to ear and stands defiantly)
(yelling frantically up to Bender)
Stay back! Take me in, and I give the order to kill! Got it? Leave me alone or she's a dead woman!

ROOF TOP OF BUILDING - WALTERS AND BENDER

Walters has a communications headset to his ear, and Bender has a bullhorn. There are dozens of SWAT-like officers with telescopic rifles aimed at Ken.

KEN(FROM BELOW)
There's a gun to her head right now! You want her blood on your hands?

BENDER
(to Walters)
What do you think?

WALTERS
Let's just follow him home.

BENDER(THROUGH BULLHORN)
Let him go!

KEN

The cops drop their guns and stare at Ken. Then Sam tries to grab the bag back, but Ken won't let go. It's tug of war.

KEN
What're you doing?

SAM
Give it back!

KEN
(to Sam)
Let go!
(to Bender)
Tell him to let go! If he doesn't let go I give the order!

SAM
Give the order! Go ahead!

KEN
Tell him to let go! She's a dead woman if he doesn't....

SAM
(pulling his gun)
Now give it to me.

Reluctantly, Ken lets go of the bag. He looks up to the cops like a child shose toy was taken away, pointing at Sam.

KEN
Make him give it back.

SAM
(turns to walk away)
Schmuck.

THE PHONE RINGS. Sam stops and answers the phone.

SAM
Who is it?

WALTERS(THROUGH PHONE)
This is Lt. Walters. What're you doing?

SAM
I'm taking the money! You got your man, the rest is your problem!

WALTERS
Mr. Stone, you may be guilty of obstructing justice, aiding and abetting a known felon, accomplice to kidnapping, and possibly murder. My advice is to drop the gun and give back the bag. We've got 150 officers, 75 cars, and two helicopters. He won't get away.

Sam hangs up - very pissed off - drops the gun and gives the bag to Ken. Ken kicks the gun away.

KEN
That's better.

Ken turns back to his car and sees all the cops.

KEN
What're you doing here?
(yelling up to Bender)
Tell them to get out of here! I won't (CONT.)

KEN (CONT.)
leave unless they're gone. If they don't go she's dead!

BENDER(THROUGH BULLHORN OFFSCREEN)
All right, gentlemen, clear the street please.

The cops all get into their cars and leave. The barricade disbands, and the street is back to normal.

KEN
That's better! Now don't follow me! Understand?

BENDER(THROUGH BULLHORN)
Yes, we understand. You can go now.

Just then, Earl whips around the corner and sees Ken holding the bag. He skids to a stop, gets out, and aims a gun at Ken.

EARL
Don't move!

KEN
Who the hell are you?
(yelling to Bender)
What the hell is going on?

EARL
(yelling back)
I'm robbing you!

Earl takes the bag and turns towards his car.

KEN
Stop him!

A bullet is fired by one of the roof top snipers - it pings on the asphalt near Earl. Earl stops and turns back to Ken.

EARL
Did you shoot at me?

KEN
No, you moron. There's police all over the place. Hundreds of them.

EARL
(looks around, sees no police)
Do I look that stupid?

KEN
Yes. You do.

EARL
If you shot at me, where's your gun?

KEN
(throwing up his hands)
You're too sharp for me. You figured me out. I don't have one.

Earl thinks for a moment and heads back to the car.

KEN
(yelling)
Stop him!

Another shot blows out Earl's tire.

EARL
That was a brand new tire.

Try as he may, Earl can't figure it out. He turns to Ken.

EARL
Gimme your keys.

KEN
I don't believe this!

BENDER(THROUGH BULLHORN)(OFFSCREEN)
Give the bag back to Bozo put the gun on the ground, and put your hands in the air!

Earl is amazed. He looks up.

EARL
(yelling up to sky)
Who said that?

BENDER AND WALTERS

They look at each other. They can't believe this guy.

WALTERS
This could very well be the stupidest person on the face of the earth. Perhaps we should shoot him.

BENDER
(to Earl through bullhorn)
The Los Angeles Police Department.

EARL
(suspiciously)
Really?

WALTERS AND BENDER

They exchange looks once again.

BENDER
(to Earl through bullhorn)
(very dryly)
No, we're the Mafia.

EARL AND KEN

Earl goes white, drops his gun, hands the bag back to Ken, and then raises his hands.

KEN IN HIS CAR

The walkie-talkie antenna is extended out the window. He looks around to see if he's being followed, constantly checking his rearview mirror, his outside mirror, etc.

KEN
(to walkie-talkie)
I don't know! I don't know. I think they're following me!

UP IN THE AIR - POLICE HELICOPTER

Following Ken with no problem.

IN THE POLICE SURVEILLANCE VAN

A tech pushes a button on a mike and talks to Bender and Walters.

BENDER AND WALTERS - IN THEIR POLICE CAR

TECH(OVER RADIO)
I've got him.

BENDER
(into his mike)
Connect us.

KEN'S VOICE
And there's another one! They lied! They didn't keep their word!

KEN IN HIS CAR

KEN
I should have known! I knew this wouldn't work! You can't trust the police!

He cautiously runs red lights. He leans looks up at the sky through the windshield.

KEN'S POV - UP IN THE SKY

The helicopter hovering, following.

KEN (OFFSCREEN)
(panicky)
They've got a HELICOPTER! I told you they'd use a helicopter! Now everything's screwed up! There's no chance!

EXT. - KEN IN HIS CAR

He screeches around a corner folowed by twenty unmarked police cars, followed by squad cars - presumably keeping their distance from Ken's POV.

BENDER AND WALTER

KEN'S VOICE
We should have used MY plan! I knew this wouldn't work! I told you they'd use a helicopter!

BENDER
He's cornered and he knows it.

WALTERS
I hope he doesn't hurt anybody.

KEN'S VOICE
I'm not going to jail! I'd rather... I'd rather...

EXT. - KEN'S CAR

He turns and heads down another street - a change of plans?

MONTAGE OF "CHASE"

Ken leads the pack of cars across town, towards the beach.

A FISHING PIER

Ken crashes through a sign that reads; NO CARS

WALTERS AND BENDER

BENDER
Oh my god!

KEN'S VOICE
(extreme panic)
NO ONE'S GONNA PUT ME IN JAIL!

Ken blares his horn and accelerates. The people part like the red sea.

WIDE SHOT - FISHING PIER

Ken crashes through the final barrier and...

OCEAN AT END OF THE PIER

...crashes into the ocean.

INT. - KEN'S CAR

The seatbelt saved him from hitting the windshield, but the impact left him unconscious. Water pours in quickly, filling up to Ken's chin. Ken suddenly regains consciousness.

EXT. - END OF PIER

The police cars fill up the pier. the fishermen abandon their spots and rush to the end of the pier to watch. The police try to clear the crowd, but the effort's in vain.

KEN'S CAR

It goes under, leaving a wake of foam, then a few bubbles and finally, no bubbles.

END OF PIER - CROWD

No one volunteers to jump in. An elderly women waves her cane.

ELDERLY WOMAN
Somebody help! They'll drown!

The crowd is quiet. Walter and Bender look solemn. Sam shows up and looks in the water.

SAM
My money...

WALTERS
Let's get the coast guard and fish him up.

VOICE
(excitedly)
Look! In the water!

THE WATER

Thousands of bills surface by the second.

VOICE
There must be a million dollars.

PIER

Sam is sick. And now people who wouldn't chance the waters to save a man's life, will jump in for the money.

SAM
(yelling)
You can't do that! You can't do that! It's not your money! It's my money! It's MY money!

DISSOLVE TO:

THE PIER - AN HOUR LATER

The pier and the nearby beaches have been cordoned off while scores of policemen gather up the washed-up bills. Walters and Bender wait. Sam takes inventory on the wet money. A scuba diver emerges from the water and removes his mouthpiece to speak.

DIVER
There's a guy in a Bozo wig strapped in the diver's seat.

SAM
What about the overnight bag?

DIVER
It's down there too.

SAM
Is there any money in it?

DIVER
Nada. It all washed out.

SAM
(to himself)
Son of a bitch.

CAMERA PANS TO WATER

The sun is setting, showering the calm sea with it's warm golden light. A lonely boat sits idly off in the distance. A sad, serene, but suitable alternative to a burial plot. The score suggests a funeral march.

VERY SLOW FADE TO BLACK:

(beat)

(beat)

(beat)

Then WE HEAR UNDERWATER SOUNDS. (Bubbling, dolphin-like squealing, the sort of sounds Ken would hear if he were alive)

VERY SLOWLY, FADE IN:

VERY CLOSE SHOT OF KEN IN A DIVER'S MASK. CAMERA PULLS BACK TO REVEAL KEN, underwater, in a scuba outfit, swimming. Strapped to his back are three oxygen tanks and an identical Samsonite bag. He passes underneath a ship where a fishing line dangles in the water. He yanks the line and a moment later a rope ladder is dropped into the water. Ken goes up.

A BOAT WITH SANDY AND BARBARA

Ken comes on board and takes off his mask. He's all smiles. They go below.

BELOW

Ken's wearing clothes and drying his hair with a towel. The Samsonite bag is on the table. Sandy starts unzipping the bag.

SANDY
We're gonna be rich.

The money's there - less the hundred thousand used for decoy.

KEN
We ARE rich.

Ken, Sandy and Barbara embrace each other like old friends. All is well and seems to be a happy ending if not for...

CLOSE SHOT - BOZO WIG AND GROUCHO GLASSES - CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal that we're in the coronar's office. The coroner pulls a white sheet over the pyscho's body and turns to Walters and Bender, shaking his head.

CORONER
This man couldn't have been driving that car; he's been dead for over 100 hours.

Walter and Bender exhange looks. They both know what to do.

EXT. - POLICE STATION

Barbara walks around the corner and into the police station.

INT. - FRONT DESK

A couple of cops field calls behind a long desk. One is on the phone, the other looks up to hear Barbara's story.

DESK COP
Yes?

BARBARA
I'm Barbara Stone.

The other cop stops talking in mid-sentence.

INT. - WALTERS AND BENDER'S OFFICE - WALTERS, BENDER AND BARBARA

BARBARA
...and then they...

A uniformed officer comes in and whispers in Walter's ear.

WALTER
Mrs. Stone, your husband's here.

Barbara stands; she looks happy.

BARBARA
Sam? Sam's here? Now?

WALTER
Should we send him in?

BARBARA
But of course!

Walters nods to the officer. He leaves. Sam appears in the doorway a moment later, looking as awkward as a human being can feel.

SAM
Don't believe what they said - I wouldn't hurt you. I...
(looks her over)
You lost weight - you look GREAT!

She smiles, very flattered.

BARBARA
(walking towards him)
Oh Sam...

Sam puts his arms out to hug her, and Barbara returns the gesture with a strong kick to his balls. Sam doubles over in pain. The cops are momentarily stunned. She grabs Sam by his collar, bends him over and slams three consecutive right hooks to the face. The cops restrain her, but they underestimate her power. She's in top shape, and her adrenalin is high. She yanks free and sets Sam up with a combination - left jab - right cross - left hook! The cops grab her, hold her back, successfully this time.

BARBARA
Son of a bitch! Tells me he's got this "problem" for 25 years! Meanwhile, he's banging this SLUT on the side! You're going to jail and rot you fucking moron! You're going to be sorry you ever met me.

SAM
I am...I am...

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE STATON - INTERROGATION ROOM - WALTERS, BENDER AND BARBARA - LATER THAT EVENING.

BARBARA
...you know the type, that's all they eat - vegetables!

CUT TO:

EXT. - KEN AND SANDY'S - THAT EVENING

A half dozen squad cars pull up. Then an unmarked unit with Walters, Bender and Barbara.

INT. - KEN AND SANDY'S - BASEMENT -

Ken and Sandy stare at the opened suitcase (filled with money), in awe that they actually pulled it off. They're dressed to go out on the town - Sandy wears one of her gowns, Ken wears a suit, and they drink champagne.

KEN
Goddamit we did it, we really did it.

THE FRONT DOOR BELL RINGS.

KEN
Let's go - the limo's here.

They head up the stairs, closing the door behind them.

LIVING ROOM

Sandy puts on a matching jacket for the gown and they go to the front door. They open the door to find...

DOORWAY - TWO UNIFORMED COPS

Behind them squad cars are lined up to form a barricade in case of a shootout. Ken and Sandy freeze.

KEN
What's going on?

Barbara steps out of a police car with Walters and Bender. They escort her across the street and up to Ken and Sandy's doorway. She looks Sandy over carefully from head to toe and does the same for Ken. Then she looks to Bender and Walters, infuriated.

BARBARA
What the hell's wrong with you? Do these people fit the descriptions I gave you? Weren't you listening? Didn't I tell you a DOZEN times they were Japanese?
(pointing to Ken and Sandy)
Do these people look Japanese? Do you know what Japanese means? It means "people from Japan". Do they look like people from Japan? NO! They look like people from Van Nuys. NOT JAPAN!

Bender and Walters are humiliated. They lead Barbara off.

BENDER
Excuse us, Mr. Kessler.

As they lead Barbara back to the car, she continues. We can tell she will continue all the way back to the station.

BARBARA
Japanese! Think about it, Hondas, Toyotas, Datsuns. I say Japanese; you give me wasps! Where the hell do you go for sushi? Jack in the Box? And where do you get your leads? Family Feud?

THE END